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Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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Fraud claims vs 2 Swift Air executives to press ahead

» Saipan Air's racketeering, unjust enrichment claims dismissed

» Pixley says he is preparing for the Feb. 2, 1015 jury trial

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The federal court has allowed Saipan Air Inc.'s fraud claims against two of three Swift Air executives to proceed, but issued a ruling favorable to the three executives on the claims of racketeering and unjust enrichment filed against them.

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TROPICAL CHRISTMAS
Saipan-da is festooned with Christmas lights as he prepares to make an appearance during last Saturday's Christmas in the Marianas event at the Paseo de Marianas in Garapan.
JAYSON CAMACHO

FOR ITS SAIPAN CASINO PROJECT

Imperial Pacific raises $100M

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Hong Kong-based Imperial Pacific International Holdings Ltd. successfully raised $99.8 million during its share subscription and placing operation.

GRRAsia, an online newsletter about the ca-

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HOUSE OK'S BILL PENALIZING ACCESSIBLE PARKING LAW OFFENDERS

Not enforcing existing law is the problem—Rayphand

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The House of Representatives' passage of House Bill 18-49 last Monday is counterproductive, according to Northern Marianas Protection & Ad-

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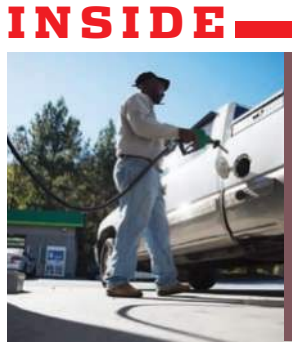

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A man suspected of going to three houses in the Philadelphia suburbs and fatally shooting six people.
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GOT A NEWS TIP?
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Local

3 big events at Christmas in the Marianas this Saturday

By JAYSON CAMACHO
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REPORTER

The Christmas in the Marianas celebration this Saturday at the Paseo de Marianas will feature three big events that community members and visitors alike will enjoy a week before Christmas.

Gordon Marciano, Pacific Development Inc. director and emcee for Christmas in the Marianas events, said there will be a health walk, a parade, and then a Christmas costume show this Saturday.

For those wanting to join the 5-kilometer health walk from the Paseo to Garapan Fishing Base, registration will start at 4:30pm at the Koban station at the Paseo de Marianas. The Marianas Walkers Association is conducting the health walk.

In line with the health walk, Marciano noted that Department of Public Safety's Fire Division will have a "Santa Claus" throwing candy to children and other onlookers.

"He will be throwing candy to complement the health walk and then will align himself with the parade," Marciano said.

Marciano said they will wait for the walkers to arrive at the Garapan Fishing Base and from there the Christmas parade will kick off.

The parade will feature nine schools and seven organizations with their floats. Schools that are participating include Koblerville Elementary School, Kagman Elementary School, Northern Marianas International School (both elementary and middle), Tanapag Junior High School, San Antonio Junior High School, Chacha Oceanview Junior High School, Saipan Southern High School, and Kagman High School.

The seven organizations include Homeland Security and Emergency Management, Department of Community and Cultural Affairs, Division of Parks and Recreation, Stellar Marianas 2014 Miss Marianas Teen Gianna S. Camacho, Saipan Mayor's Office, Department of Public Safety-3D, and Matua Riders.

"We are hoping that by 5:30 we could have all the lineups so when the walkers arrive we can start the parade and head off to PDM," Marciano said.

He said the parade will go from Garapan Fishing Base along Beach Road toward the end leading to Micro Beach Road and then on to Coral Tree Avenue.

"The floats will then be parked for about an a hour and a half so that the public can take pictures with the floats if they want to," Marciano said.

This will be followed by a Christmas costume contest featuring the schools that are participating.

"Then there will be entertainment after. Then on the last Saturday, Dec. 27, the winners for the Christmas tree, costume, caroling, and float contests will be announced," Marciano said.

11 cases referred to truancy committee

By DENNIS B. CHAN
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REPORTER

Approximately 11 cases have been referred to the CNMI State Board of Education's School Attendance Review Committee, according to legal counsel Adam Hardwicke, who said he believes "there are probably many more on the wings."

He described the groups handling SARC cases at this point as a "finite" number of people. SARC was newly formed this year.

"I requested and did education and training for counselors, asking counselors to agree to volunteer to handle at least one SARC referral other than the ones they are referring within a school," he told board members last week.

This, he believes, is now in the works.

The SARC committee is also preparing to attend a Parent-Teacher-Student Association meeting for a "question-and-answer" session sometime within the next month, he said.

"The SARC committee is trying its best to get out there quickly as possible but trying to not bite off more than it can chew," Hardwicke said.

"It's going to be something that the Public School System is going to be responsible for…forever. So [SARC] is doing a very good job but it's also very deliberately reaching out," he said.

SARC was formed early this year to provide public schools with intervention for juveniles and their families in addressing truancy, irregular attendance, or insubordinate or disorderly behavior in school before referral to the juvenile justice system.

The committee is composed of a parent of a school-age child, representatives from PSS, the Coalition of Private Schools, the juvenile probation unit of the Division of Youth Services, the Child Protective Unit of the Division of Youth Services, and the Department of Public Safety.

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SIDEBAR

'Open your hearts to dogs'

By DENNIS CHAN
dennis_chan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A concerned volunteer for the animal shelter is hopeful a "parade of dogs" at this Saturday's Christmas Parade will open the hearts of community members to the plight of homeless dogs here.

The volunteer, who prefers to be referred to as "Damiana," said she has planned for the walk with Mayor's Office Dog Control Program director Spencer Marchadesch.

Dogs will be dressed with decorated vests as part of the parade, she said.

She invites community members to contact the program if they are interested in joining or helping out with the event.

She said she wants to make the people of Saipan aware of the stray dog problem on island. Her goal is make people know of the many "wonderful dogs, ready and affordable" for adoption from the animal shelter.

Damiana said she has had 40 years of professional work with dogs, having trained trained "thousands," and added that she is open to following up on adoptions with dog-obedience classes to help dogs from being "chained up in the back yard."

A dog should be a "member of the family," according to her.

Right now, Foremost has sponsored a banner for the parade, according to Damiana. She hopes more people will get involved with the animal shelter.

They will join the Christmas parade beginning at the Kristo Rai Church to the American Memorial Park at 4:30pm, she said. The parade is reported to kick off at 5:30pm.

'TIS THE SEASON
Children perform a Christmas carol during last Saturday's Christmas in the Marianas event held at the Paseo de Marianas.
JAYSON CAMACHO

Speaker's wife spent 2 days in jail for leaving the scene of accident

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Mercedes Quitugua Deleon Guerrero, the wife of House Speaker Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero, recently spent two days in jail after pleading guilty to leaving the scene of an accident involving her car and a man driving a motor scooter.

Deleon Guerrero, through her counsel Michael Dotts, told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that her mistake was leaving the scene and that, had she stayed, there would have been no charges filed.

Dotts said the person on the motor scooter caused the accident because it plowed into the side of Mrs. Deleon Guerrero's car as she was making a left turn.

Dotts said his client had been involved in an accident some years before (also not her fault) and as a result of that, she had a flashback when the scooter hit her car.

The lawyer said Mrs. Deleon Guerrero panicked, left, and that was the wrong thing to do. Dotts said his client, however, reported to the Department of Public Safety the next morning.

Dotts said the man on the motor scooter was driving very fast and they believe he was speeding.

He said the man was taken to the hospital and that they were advised that a blood test showed that he may have been impaired by the use of alcohol.

Dotts said they were also told that the headlight on the man's motor scooter was not functioning properly and this explains why his client did not see him coming.

Dotts said his client admitted her fault for leaving the scene and that she already served her time in jail.

The lawyer said even though her husband is the House speaker, she was treated like anyone else and had to go to jail.

"And like anyone else she should be forgiven and allowed to move on with her life. She panicked. That does happen. We all make mistakes," Dotts added.

According to court documents, Mrs. Deleon Guerrero signed a plea agreement with the government and on Nov. 6, 2014 pleaded guilty to failure to stop at the scene.

Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho accepted the plea deal and sentenced Mrs. Deleon Guerrero on Nov. 6 to 30 days in prison, all suspended except for two days.

Camacho ordered her to spend two days in prison starting Nov. 28, 2014, at 9am.

Mrs. Deleon Guerrero was placed on one year probation and required to perform 75 hours of community service, and pay a $1,000 fine, and $150 in probation and court assessment fees.

Assistant attorney general Clayton Graef moved to dismiss the charges of failure to provide information and failure to render assistance. The judge granted the motion.

Graef stated that according to the factual basis of the plea deal, Mrs. Deleon Guerrero admits to operating a motor vehicle on the highways involved in an accident resulting in damage to property on July 4, 2014, at 9:39pm without immediately stopping her vehicle at the scene of the accident.

According to a traffic citation issued by police officer Norris Kwon, the accident happened along Monsignor Martinez Road intersection to As Gonno at 9:29pm.

Mrs. Deleon Guerrero, 51, was operating a 2004 Toyota four-door sedan with license plate ACA-640 registered to her husband.

House speakership is still up in the air

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

With three contenders vying for the position of speaker, the process of selecting the next leader of the House of Representatives of the 19th Legislature may drag on well after Christmas or even after the New Year; with some even speculating that the decision may linger up to a day or two before inauguration day.

Incumbent House Speaker Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero (Ind-Saipan), House minority leader Rep. Ramon Tebuteb (Ind-Saipan), and floor leader Rep. Ralph Demapan (R-Saipan) all acknowledge that the House speakership is still up in the air.

To win the speakership, Deleon Guerrero, Tebuteb, or Demapan must muster at least 11 votes.

So far, all three and their respective supporters have been busy courting incoming House members as well as those who were re-elected to their sides.

While Demapan can count on the seven NMI Republican Party lawmakers elected to the 19th Congress for their votes, how the independents will be dividing their votes between Deleon Guerrero and Benavente is still not set in stone.

Sources, however, say that Tebuteb has the support of nine independents, among them Reps. Edmund Villagomez, Ralph N. Yumul, Anthony T. Benavente, Roman Benavente, and Larry Deleon Guerrero, and representatives-elect Edwin Propst, Vinson Sablan, and Blas Jonathan "B.J." Attao.

Deleon Guerrero, meanwhile, is said to be counting on the votes of Rep. Anthony P. Sablan and freshmen lawmakers Edwin Aldan and Francis Taimanao.

Aside from Demapan, GOP representatives in the next House include Reps. Felicidad Ogumoro, John Paul P. Sablan, and George Camacho, and newcomers Angel Demapan, Joseph "Leepan" T. Guerrero, and Glenn L. Maratita.

Last week, the incoming Senate proclaimed that current vice president Victor Hocog (Ind-Rota) would be the president of the next Senate. Joining him in the leadership are Sen. Frank Borja (Ind-Tinian) as vice president, senator-elect Rep. Teresita Santos (R-Rota) as Senate secretary, and senator-elect Arnold Palacios as floor leader

The 18th Legislature will *sine die* is on Jan. 5. 2015, while the 19th Legislature will be sworn in on Jan. 12, 2015.

Rep. Ralph Demapan (R-Saipan) confers with Joe Pangelinan, employee development and staffing chief of the Office of Personnel Management, during a House session last week when the former's House Bill 18-213 was introduced.
MARK RABAGO

Hospital's overall correction plan is to reassess policies and procedures

By JAYSON CAMACHO
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REPORTER

The only public hospital in the CNMI has just four days left to submit its plan on how it will rectify the remaining concerns of the Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services. Otherwise, its condition of participation in Medicare will be terminated.

If the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. fails to turn in its plan of correction by Dec. 22--this coming Monday--CMS will proceed with terminating the hospital's Medicare provider agreement on April 3, 2015. That would mean the loss of millions of dollars the corporation relies on to run the Commonwealth Health Center.

» Four more days for hospital to submit correction plan to CMS

The plan of correction CHC needs to come up with must address six deficiencies: in its governing body, patient rights, medical staff, medical record services, physical environment, infection control, and discharge planning.

The corporation's chief executive officer, Esther Muna, said that one of the big focuses of the plan of correction is reassessing its policies and procedures so that everyone is in line with their work at the hospital.

"We need to go back and reinforce the training on our policies and, as what I've discussed with the hospital administrator [Jess Tudela] is that we're taking a different approach this time," Muna said.

That new approach is basically bringing more teamwork into play and giving more ownership to the staff and management in implementing the policies.

According to Muna, the hospital staff has been having small meetings on ways to address the concerns raised by CMS.

"So we're having daily meetings and we're taking the approach in a way that makes everybody involved in the input of what we decide or how we're going to address the issues," Muna said.

"What we notice is that we just really need to remind ourselves and do training and we have to try to make sure and remember our policies and procedures," she added.

Muna also said that part of the plan of correction is to address patient rights, to encourage patients to speak out if they are not getting the care they need or if they have any concerns.

"We also want to encourage the patients to speak out if they see something that they are uncomfortable with. They can bring it up to the nurses if they want to because it's their right," Muna said.

"We want patients to understand that this is their hospital and let them know that. We have a grievance procedure if they have an issue with the care that they receive," she added.

Muna said they have posted so many posters about those patient rights or responsibilities.

"So we have been having these meetings and this is not that we came up with this plan of correction for the sake of needing to have one, but we're coming up with this because it has to be doable, practical, and have it done faster," she said.

CRIME OF THE WEEK

Papago burglary and theft

Crime Stoppers is seeking the public's help for a burglary and theft incident that occurred at a residence in Papago near Santos Acres.

On Dec. 6, 2014, at around 1:30pm, a local couple arrived home to discover it in disarray. The residence was burglarized and items stolen. The police were contacted and the point of entry is believed to be through the living room sliding door, which was jimmied open. Witnesses noticed a blue Toyota Rav4 exiting the residence about an hour before the victims arrived home.

The missing items include one 13" MacBook Pro laptop computer with royal blue cover (has a Quicksilver Hawaiian Flag sticker next to touchpad), one 13" MacBook Air laptop computer with aqua blue cover, one 15" Samsung laptop (silver and black), four Nikon cameras, one Kodak video camera, a purple jade pendant, a gold Hawaiian bracelet, a G-string tenor Koa ukulele, a Kala Cutaway ukulele, a Makala Concert ukulele, a purple fiberglass ukulele hard case, a blue fiberglass ukulele hard case, several jewelry to include a diamond necklace, gold earrings, gold/silver watches, a yellow Samsung smartphone, $500 cash and several other items.

The total amount stolen from the break-in is estimated to be at over $20,000.

DPS and Crime Stoppers need your help. Please contact the Crime Stoppers hotline at 234-7272 should you want to remain anonymous or use our website at www.nmicrimestoppers.net Crime stoppers pays up to $1,000 for any information leading to an arrest. It pays to call. ***(Crime Stoppers)***

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COMMONWEALTH LOTTERY COMMISSION

PUBLIC NOTICE

A Regular Meeting of the Commonwealth Lottery Commission will be held at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 18, 2014 at the Juan Sablan Memorial Building on Capitol Hill, Saipan. The public is invited to attend.

The following is the proposed agenda:

I. Call to Order
II. Roll Call/Determination of Quorum
III. Public Comment
IV. Adoption of Agenda
V. Adoption of Minutes
VI. New Business
A. VLT
B. RFP
VII. Executive Session
VIII. Adjournment

For further information, please contact the Lottery Commission by telephone through the Office of the Attorney General at 237-7500.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Office of the Secretary of Public Works
2nd floor-Oleai Joeten Commercial Center
Saipan, MP 96950

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
DPW/SWM15-RFP-001

PROCUREMENT OF SERVICES FOR REMOVAL, PACKAGING, CONTAINMENT, AND SHIPPING OF HAZARDOUS WASTE MATERIALS COLLECTED AT THE LOWER BASE TRANSFER STATION

Governor Eloy S. Inos and Lt. Governor Jude Hofschneider, through the Secretary of Public Works, are soliciting sealed proposals from qualified companies or individuals to provide Procurement of Services for removal, packaging, containment, and shipping of hazardous waste materials collected at the Lower Base Transfer Station (LBRTS), Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

This procurement is made in accordance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, dated May 24, 2001. Proposal procedures shall be in full compliance with §**70-30.3-210** (competitive sealed proposals) of the Procurement Regulations.

The Scope of Services will be available on or after **December 17, 2014** at the Solid Waste Management Division office, Lower Base Transfer Station, Saipan, MP 96950. A mandatory Pre-proposal Conference is scheduled for 9:30 a.m., local time, at the Solid Waste Management Division office, Lower Base Transfer Station **January 07, 2015**. Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing to Mr. Enrique Dela Cruz, Director of Solid Waste Management Division, Lower Base Transfer Station, Saipan, or fax to (670) 322-2762 no later than 4:00 p.m. local time January 14, 2015.

Proposals must be sealed and marked **"DPW/SWM15-RFP-001."** For proposers within the CNMI, one original and five (5) copies of sealed proposal must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, MP 96950 no later than 10:00 a.m., local time, January 26, 2015.

Proposers located outside of the CNMI may obtain additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their proposal by submitting a **Notice of Intent to Propose**. Notices of Intent to submit proposals must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than 10:00 a.m., local time, **January 26, 2015**, and may be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515 or via email to procurement@pticom.com. For proposers located outside the CNMI, one original and five (5) copies of sealed proposals must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **January 26, 2015** and must be received no later **February 04, 2015**. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of proposal.

Discussions may be conducted with responsible proposers in accordance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations. Proposers shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity for discussion and revision of proposals and such revisions may be permitted after submission and prior award for the purpose of obtaining the best and final offer. In conducting discussions, there shall be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing proposers. All responses to this RFP should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the proposer awarded a contract.

The firm selected will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations NMIAC Section **70-30.3-245** and must be able to obtain a CNMI Business License prior to contract award.

Procurement of these services is made in accordance with NMIAC Section **70-30.3-210** of the CNMI Procurement Regulations. Proposals for the project will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Operation Plan: 40%
2. Past Experience on Similar Projects: 40%
3. Professional Qualifications: 10%
4. Financial Proposal: 10%

Technical merit is more important than price and the Government reserves the right to award to other than the lowest proposer.

Award shall be made to the responsible proposer whose proposal is determined in writing to be most advantageous to the government taking into consideration price and the evaluation factors set forth in this request for proposal. No other factors or criteria shall be used in the evaluation.

The government reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive any imperfection in a proposal if in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All proposals shall become the property of the CNMI government.

/s/MARTIN C. SABLAN
Secretary of Public Works

/s/HERMAN S. SABLAN
Director of Procurement and Supply

Convicted murderer's parole application denied

The CNMI Board of Parole has rejected the parole application of Jesse James Camacho, who is serving a 45-year sentence for the murder of a 13-year-old boy and three more years for bolting from jail.

Chief of Parole Joseph T. Guerrero told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that the Board of Parole denied Camacho's application during the parole hearing last week.

Guerrero said that Camacho has already served 16 years and six months in prison.

No other details were given regarding Camacho's application.

Camacho, tagged as the mastermind in the killing of 13-year-old Antonio Sablan Jr. at a house in Dandan in April 1998, was convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced in 1999 to 45 years in prison.

Two of Camacho's male co-defendants were at the time both minors and pleaded guilty.

One co-defendant confessed to repeatedly stabbing Sablan to death. He said Camacho threatened to kill him and his family if he refused to follow his order.

The killing was supposedly part of initiation rites for membership into the so-called Red Rum Gang.

The victim was stabbed 37 times inside his house.

In 2002, Superior Court Associate Judge David Wiseman sentenced Camacho to three more years for bolting from prison. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Saipan Mayor's Office gets funds from poker fee revenue appropriations

By JAYSON CAMACHO
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REPORTER

After criticizing how the Legislature just uses "boiler plate bills" and cookie cutting measure for faster passage, Saipan Mayor Marian DLG Tudela finally got her wish--the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation finally considered including the Saipan Mayor's Office in its appropriations from the poker fees for fiscal year 2015.

Tudela

Tudela said that SNILD has considered the mayor's office among the beneficiaries of House Local Bill 18-64, Draft 1. Tudela said that they will be receiving $32,000 from the appropriation package.

HLB 18-64, D1 seeks to appropriate additional collections under Saipan Local Law 18-07 for activities within the Third Senatorial District and for other purposes. It seeks to appropriate the amount of $387,000.

According to Tudela, the bill is now up for Gov. Eloy S. Inos' signature.

"We're very thankful to the local delegation members for considering and actually giving us $32,000 for heavy equipment," Tudela said.

HLB 18-64 states that $32,000 will be for the Office of the Mayor of Saipan for field operations equipment under the expenditure authority of the mayor of Saipan. The mayor of Saipan shall submit an expenditure of funds report to the chairman of the SNILD 30 days after the end of the year.

"It's money that comes at the right time and we are now in the process of procuring heavy equipment. We don't only want to procure and buy used heavy equipment. We really want to buy good equipment, in good condition," Tudela said.

She said that, together with the funds they have received from the Legislature and the Office of Insular Affairs, she will use the money to buy more heavy equipment.

"We will put those together and put out a bid for another equipment. I hope that Inos passes it because it's money that will be used to benefit the community more and we can have better equipment and do things that our office should be doing," she said.

Mayor's office special adviser Henry Hofschneider is also thankful to the local delegation members.

"Every appropriation counts. I'm pretty sure that the delegation looked at our letters and considered our letters. It is something that Tudela wanted for the people--better services," Hofschneider said.

He said that although they had asked for no less than $60,000, they are still thankful for the infusion of funds.

FRAUD

From Page 1

In a 32-page decision and order, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona ruled that Saipan Air's fraud claim against Jeffrey Conry and Boris Van Lier shall proceed but not against Donald A. Stukes.

Manglona also granted summary judgment in favor of Conry, Van Lier, and Stukes in Saipan Air's claims for violations of the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization Act and for unjust enrichment. This means Saipan Air's RICO and unjust enrichment claims are now dismissed.

When asked yesterday, Saipan Air counsel Steven P. Pixley said he is preparing for the jury trial scheduled on Feb. 2, 2015.

The trial will be against Conry and Van Lier relating to the fraud claims.

Conry and Van Lier are currently employed by Arizona-based Swift Air, which emerged from bankruptcy in 2013.

Saipan Air filed the racketeering lawsuit against Conry, Van Lier, and Donald A. Stukes in July 2012.

Swift Air filed for bankruptcy protection in Arizona shortly after notifying Saipan Air that it would not deliver two 757 aircraft and one 737 aircraft for Saipan Air's program. Saipan Air was unable to sue Swift Air directly because of the bankruptcy filing.

Conry, Van Lier, and Stukes filed a motion for summary judgment. The motion sought a dismissal of Saipan Air's claims.

Saipan Air opposed the motion. After hearing the motion last Oct. 30, Manglona placed the matter under advisement.

In the order last week, Manglona said Stukes is alleged to have made false representations only during negotiations beginning May 31, 2012, for a $1.5 million bridge loan.

Manglona said because the loan was never consummated, Saipan Air cannot show detrimental reliance on or damages caused by those alleged misrepresentations.

"Therefore, as to fraud, summary judgment must be granted in favor of Stukes," Manglona said.

With respect to Conry and Van Lier, Manglona said Saipan Air has produced sufficient evidence to create a genuine dispute as to whether, at the time the aircraft, maintenance, and insurance (ACMI) agreement was executed, the two had any intention to deliver on their promises of aircraft and services.

"Although as a matter of law, Saipan Air could have justifiably relied on misrepresentations made by defendants early in the negotiations, the evidence, when viewed in the light most favorable to the nonmoving party, does not support the conclusion that in fact Saipan Air so relied," she said.

Manglona said that e-mails exchanged between Saipan Air's chief operating officer Adam Ferguson and Van Lier show that in mid-January 2012, both parties to the negotiation doubted Swift Air could deliver service in time for Saipan Air's July 2012 launch.

Manglona said the fact that Saipan Air's COO [Ferguson], the person to whom the alleged false representations were made, does not think the fraud started until March 2012 is strong evidence that Saipan Air did not rely on the early representations.

Manglona said Saipan Air has not cited any substantial evidence that it relied on the early representations when it decided to enter into the ACMI Agreement and sent a security deposit in April 2012, or when it wired cash to Swift Air a second time in late May 2012.

"The court therefore finds that evidence of detrimental reliance on the early representations is not such that a reasonable jury might determine that fraud was proved within convincing clarity," the judge said.

Manglona said there is a clear dispute as to material facts surrounding the conclusion of the ACMI Agreement and the two wire transfers.

Manglona said the court finds that Saipan Air has set forth specific facts showing that there is genuine issue for trial as to whether, after negotiations resumed in March 2012, Conry and Van Lier knowingly made material misrepresentations that fraudulently induced Saipan Air to enter into the ACMI Agreement and pay the $900,000 security deposit.

Manglona said Saipan Air's most compelling argument against justifiable reliance is that by May 22, 2012, Ferguson had concluded that Van Lier and Conry were liars.

Moreover, she said, although Ferguson no longer trusted Conry and Van Lier, Saipan Air was "not aware that we're in the middle of a completely fraudulent deal up until that point."

"Saipan Air has produced sufficient admissible evidence to try this question to the jury," the judge said.

On RICO claim, Manglona said Saipan Air cannot establish continuity by reference to alleged fraudulent acts against other persons and entities.

"Because Saipan Air has not come forward with evidence to show a pattern of racketeering activity, summary judgment will enter in favor of all defendants on the RICO claim," Manglona said.

The judge said it is unnecessary therefore to consider Stukes' alternative argument that the evidence does not show that he directed the affairs of the alleged racketeering enterprise.

On the unjust enrichment claim, Manglona said Saipan Air has not gone beyond inflated rhetoric to actually demonstrate that as a matter of law and based on the evidence, Swift Air was the defendants' alter ego.

ENFORCING

From Page 1

vocacy Systems Inc. executive director Jim Rayphand.

HB 18-49 amends the CNMI traffic code to provide a penalty for not providing designated parking spaces for persons with disabilities and provide penalties for unauthorized persons parking in such spaces.

"HB 18-149 contributes nothing toward ensuring accessible parking for those persons with disabilities who need such parking," said Rayphand, who added that the measure is redundant since the Legislature already passed an accessible parking law that provided for enforcement and penalties in November 2011.

The NMPASI executive director stated that the current law, Public Law 17-65, is already sufficient and the only thing lacking is stricter enforcement.

"The problem is not the law but the lack of enforcement by the Attorney General's Office and the Department of Public Safety."

He also took issue with the House Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations' report that "current Commonwealth law does not require businesses to provide designated parking spaces for persons with disabilities."

"The 'Findings' are incorrect. Current Commonwealth law does require businesses to provide designated parking spaces for persons with disabilities. The proposed repeal of 9 C.M.C. Sections 5657, 5658, and 5659 destroys the heart of the law which now requires businesses and privately owned facilities to provide accessible parking and provides for specific identification of those parking spaces," lamented Rayphand.

He added that current law further provides for enforcement of that requirement by providing a civil fine of $100 per day until spaces are designated and requires the Office of the Attorney General to bring necessary actions to enforce these requirements.

"The current law also requires the Department of Public Safety to cause the removal of vehicles from designated accessible parking spaces unless the vehicle displays a special identification placard. …Current law also sets forth the standards for parking reserved for persons with disabilities," he said.

Rayphand said HB 18-49 providing criminal penalties for violation of parking statute but not requiring parking spaces to comply with the "technical requirements" of the law is also problematic and may not meet due process constitutional standards.

Authored by Rep. Antonio R. Agulto (R-Saipan), HB 18-49 passed the House last Monday on a vote of 16 yes votes and four absences. It now goes to the Senate.

IMPERIAL

From Page 1

sino industry in Asia, reported that the parent company of Best Sunshine International Ltd. was able to complete the sale of 510 million new shares, the proceeds of which will be used to finance its $7.1-billion integrated casino resort project on Saipan.

Mark A. Brown, president and CEO of Best Sunshine, said the company couldn't be more happier with Imperial Pacific raising close to $100 million that will finance its projects on the island.

"We are very pleased with the successful completion of the share placements. We have been receiving very positive feedback from our investors. They are optimistic with the company's vision and see the potential of [the] CNMI becoming the destination of choice for leisure travel among Asian travelers," he said in an email to *Saipan Tribune*.

Saipan casino commissioners Alvaro Santos and Juan Sablan said they would be reserving comments on Best Sunshine's activities here and abroad until such time they are able to meet with executives of the Imperial Pacific subsidiary.

Both said they expect to meet with Best Sunshine officials on island in the "next couple of weeks."

The company's filing at the Hong Kong Stock Exchange last Monday noted that it "issued 510,000,000 shares at HKD1.55 apiece. The placing shares represent approximately 5.99 percent of the firm's enlarged capital."

GRRAsia reported that the shares were allotted to "not less" than six places, which are independent third parties of the company.

"None of the places and their respective associates has become a substantial shareholder upon completion of the placing," said Imperial Pacific, an investor in the profit stream of Macau junket firm Hengsheng Group.

Best Sunshine's $7.1-billion integrated casino resort on Saipan involves the construction of 4,200 hotel rooms and 300 villas, a 600-seat theater, 10,000-square-meter casino floor, 10,000-square-meter retail area, over 20 F&B outlets, and a theme park.

Last Nov. 19, Imperial Pacific filed with the Hong Kong Stock Exchange that it has been allowed by the CNMI government to bring in outside investors and offer up to 49 percent of the issued share capital of the company.

Quichocho found committing another professional misconduct

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge David A. Wiseman has determined that disbarred lawyer Ramon King Quichocho Jr. committed acts constituting professional misconduct by filing false statements against Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo and bringing a lawsuit against Govendo to delay proceedings and avoid sanction.

In another disciplinary action issued against Quichocho yesterday, Wiseman sanctioned the controversial lawyer with a public reprimand and ordered him to pay all costs and fees incurred in the matter.

Wiseman said Quichocho violated his duty to maintain the integrity of the legal profession by making false statements, misrepresenting case law, failing to observe the high standard of conduct required of judicial nominees, and timing court filings to delay proceedings and avoid discipline.

"Such conduct violates the professional standards for an attorney practicing before the courts of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands," the judge said.

The disciplinary hearing was held last week, Dec. 9. Daniel T. Guidotti was the appointed disciplinary counsel. Quichocho did not appear and respond to the complaint.

The CNMI Bar Association Disciplinary Committee forwarded to the court the disciplinary matter arising from Quichocho's conduct and actions during the litigation of Shinji Fujie's and Toshin Group International Inc.'s lawsuit against Quichocho and his uncle, Joaquin Q. Atalig.

During the Fujie case, Quichocho twice requested the recusal of Govendo. He alleged, among other things, that Govendo should recuse himself because he is prejudiced against Filipinos and locals.

On Aug. 6, 2013, Govendo issued an order to show cause, warning Quichocho and the lawyer of his co-defendant of possible sanctions based on their filing of a motion to reconsider. Govendo ordered Quichocho to appear on Sept. 3, 2013, for a hearing to determine whether sanctions were appropriate.

Quichocho

An hour before the Sept. 3 disciplinary hearing, Quichocho filed a taxpayer lawsuit against Govendo, alleging that the government should force the judge to disgorge any money paid to him "for acts for which he was sanctioned by the Supreme Court."

Quichocho at the same time filed a motion to disqualify Govendo from hearing further proceedings in Fujie's case because he (Quichocho) had named the judge a defendant in the taxpayer lawsuit.

In September 2013, Govendo sanctioned Quichocho with a $5,000 fine for filing documents that he found saturated with abusive language directed at him and attorney Stephen Nutting.

Govendo and Nutting complained to the Bar Association Disciplinary Committee concerning Quichocho's tactics, and whether those tactics violated Quichocho's duties to maintain the integrity of the legal profession.

In his order yesterday, Wiseman said that Quichocho's filing of the taxpayer lawsuit and motion to disqualify were not sincere attempts to improve the integrity of the judicial process.

"Instead, they were intentional attempts to harass Judge Govendo, subvert the judicial process, and unethically seek an outcome that favored respondent," Wiseman said.

Wiseman said that, while it generally is not an abuse of the legal process to file in good faith a motion to disqualify a judge or to file in good faith a claim against a judge or a judge's relative, the manner in which Quichocho used legal tools to undermine the legal process in an attempt to avoid sanction cannot be tolerated.

"Such conduct wastes judicial resources and undermines the judicial function of regulating attorney conduct," he said.

Although suspension would be warranted, since Quichocho is already disbarred, the appropriate sanction is a public reprimand, Wiseman said.

Last July 16, Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho ordered the disbarment of Quichocho from the practice of law in CNMI courts for professional misconduct in representing his then-client, businesswoman Jung Ja Kim.

Last Aug. 13, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona suspended Quichocho from the practice of law in federal court for a period of three years following Camacho's suspension of the lawyer.

Last May 28, Camacho suspended Quichocho's license to practice law for three years for using a legal tool to harass a former client in order to obtain payment.

Last July, Wiseman ordered a public reprimand against Quichocho for professional misconduct in connection with another Bar complaint filed by a couple.

Last March 28, a federal jury reached a unanimous verdict, holding Quichocho and his wife, and his law firm liable to pay $2.4 million in damages to Jung Ja Kim, who filed a racketeering lawsuit against them.

House passes slew of resolutions

The House of Representatives passed four resolutions in quick succession last Monday—three honoring two individuals and a group and one requesting compensation or land exchange to mitigate flooding in Chalan Kanoa.

House Resolution 18-67 requests the Department of Public Lands to facilitate the land compensation or land exchange for the taking of private property in Chalan Kanoa.

Due to the hazards and problems flooding has posed in the area, the bill proposes that a drainage or ponding location to catch runoff water be built in the area that will be acquired by DPL.

HR 18-68, meanwhile, honors Saipan Mayor Marian Deleon Guerrero Tudela's "distinguished career and congratulate and commend her countless exemplary accomplishments and contributions to the people of the Northern Marianas."

Tudela became mayor after former mayor Donald Glenn P. Flores' untimely passing in June this year. She has the distinction of being the first ever woman to occupy the position of mayor on Saipan.

Long-time CNMI resident Jerold "Jerry" Facey, meanwhile, is being honored by HR 18-70 "for his outstanding services to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, most especially the citizens of the Commonwealth."

Facey is a familiar fixture in the islands' volunteer groups as he is a member of the American Red Cross NMI Chapter, Veterans of Foreign Wars Office, as well as a board member of the Northern Marianas College Foundation.

The House also passed HR 18-69 last Tuesday to "commend the Northern Mariana Islands Crime Stoppers for its endeavors in increasing public safety and voice support for a non-profit organization that has become a integral tool in keeping the citizens of the Northern Mariana Islands safe."

NMI Crime Stoppers was founded in 1989 and collaborates with the media, law enforcement, and the community to provide a contact number and website accessible to everyone to report information about crime in the NMI and elsewhere.

Tips to NMI Crime Stoppers have cleared over 400 cases, led to the arrest of over 250 persons, recovered over $250,000 in stolen property, and taken over $2.6 million worth of illegal drugs off the streets. ***(Mark Rabago)***

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-15-004

SECURITY GUARD SERVICES

The Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC), Office of the Executive Director is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms to provide Security Guard Services for various posts at CUC, Saipan, Tinian and Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check, wire transfer or credit card in the amount of $100.00 for one package set. Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division by December 29, 2014 to be considered.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by a site visitation of CUC Saipan Facilities will be held on **December 30, 2014** at 10:00 a.m. (ChST) at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No. 17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building. A site visitation of CUC Rota Facilities will be conducted on January 2, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. (ChST). A site visitation of CUC Tinian Facilities will be conducted on January 5, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. (ChST).

Contractors must provide proof of "Indemnity Liability Insurance," specifically covering security workers assigned to CUC's compound. Coverage must be a minimum of $200,000.00. The Contractor shall agrees to and indemnify and hold CUC harmless from and against all liability, loss, damage or injury, and all cost and expenses (including attorneys' fees and costs of any suit related thereto) suffered or incurred by the Cooperative, arising from or related to Contractor's negligent performance under the contract.

Bidders shall provide a certification signed by a principal of the company stating that the company is currently in full compliance with all applicable CNMI and Federal Labor Laws and has been for the past Five (5) years. Bidders shall submit a listing of all of its employees (US & Foreign) with corresponding job titles and a certification of good standing from the CNMI Department of Labor. Failure of the company to provide the certification is grounds to reject the entire bid.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-IFB-15-004, Security Guard Services", to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST, Saipan Time) on January 15, 2015** at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A *Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bid in anticipation of a contract. This request and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. The contractor shall be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. All responses to this Invitation for Bids should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the bidder, awarded a contract.

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective bidders and must be submitted in writing no later than 10:00 a.m. (ChST) on **December 31, 2014** to Manny B. Sablan, Purchasing Officer, CUC Procurement & Supply Division via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Vincent Pangelinan, Safety Officer, CUC Compliance & Safety Division via email address vince.pangelinan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and to waive any defects in said bid, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

ALAN W. FLETCHER
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Officer

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-15-008

8" ACP WATERLINE ABANDONMENT FOR SAN VICENTE SERVICE AREA EXTENSION PROJECT, SAIPAN

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the 8" ACP Waterline Abandonment for San Vicente Service Area Extension Project, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. This work consists of disconnecting customer service lateral connections off the 8" ACP and reconnecting these customers on to the proper tank service area distribution main. Work will also consist of installing new gate valve assemblies and the abandonment of the 8" ACP waterline. Payment is only for the items completely installed and accepted by CUC. The duration of the contract is 190 calendar days from date of award of the contract.

This project is funded through a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from USEPA.

Prospective Bidders for this IFB must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The IFB package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $200.00 for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by a site visit is scheduled on **December 31, 2014 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan.

One (1) original and Seven (7) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked *"8" ACP Waterline Abandonment for San Vicente Service Area Extension Project, Saipan"* to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on January 20, 2015**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before due date and time. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. *A Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract. Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. All responses to this Invitation for Bids should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the bidder, awarded a contract.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. The award of a contract may be contingent upon the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission's (CPUC) approval. If CPUC approval is required, the contract will not be executed by CUC until such approval is provided.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered bidders and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on January 2, 2015** to Manny B. Sablan, Jr., Purchasing Officer, Procurement & Supply Division via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Yvonne Cabrera, Engineer, Water & Wastewater Division via email yvonne.cabrera@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and waive any defects in said bid proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

ALAN W. FLETCHER
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Officer

With Kilili's help, NMC aims for equal footing in federal funds

By DENNIS B. CHAN
dennis_chan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Higher education was not reauthorized this year but the Northern Marianas College's Board of Regents is hopeful that Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan will help pass legislation that includes the CNMI and the insular areas for programs, facilities, and research funding currently afforded to underserved and underrepresented areas in the United States.

In an interview, regent William Torres said Sablan could help explain "the plight of the college" and help them qualify for funding for facilities, programs, workforce development, or research.

As they are now under a senior accreditation commission, research is one area the college is expected to improve, Torres said.

He said Hispanic-serving colleges, as well as African-American and Native American-serving colleges, have specific funding sources that are afforded to them as "underrepresented and underserved" areas.

Torres believes the insular areas, especially the CNMI, fall under such labels. He described the CNMI as "young nation" in need of all the resources it could get with a small economy and geographical disadvantages, being far from the mainland.

"There's this belief that if the insular areas and specifically the CNMI are recognized by legislation in like fashion as black, Hispanic, and Native American communities, they will be in a stronger position to be well-endowed and well-funded," he said.

This, he said, would help "level the playing field" for the insular areas.

"Where we are now, we have to compete on an unequal footing with the states, unlike tribal, black and other regions mentioned as underserved or underrepresented."

He said the college supports Sablan's bid to get into a subcommittee on higher education and workforce development.

"We will support him [in his bid]. We need him, we need a voice," he said.

Opportunities

College representatives visited Washington, D.C., earlier this year. Representatives from the American Council on Education and National Science Foundation told the college that "looking for any piece of legislation that the CNMI could be drafted into was especially critical," according to Torres.

Their advice, Torres disclosed, were points he shared with Sablan in their correspondence last month.

ACE underscored the importance of having a "face" in Washington, Torres said. The college was also advised to attend the annual ACE meeting next year, and invite Sablan to attend as well.

It was also recommended that the college become actively involved with the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities, Torres said.

Torres also asked for help for funding under the Asian American Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions.

While NMC may be eligible under AANAPISI, the college has to date not secured any designated funding, according to Torres.

Sablan recently committed to helping NMC in his next term in Congress. College president Dr. Sharon Hart has also expressed commitment to a stronger working relationship with Sablan.

LIGHTING 'EM UP CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

To add holiday cheer to downtown Garapan for residents and visitors, the Marianas Visitors Authority illuminated palms trees in road medians with Christmas lights on Dec. 12, 2014. The Christmas project was also supported by the Div. of Parks and Recreation and the Commonwealth Utilities Corp, and other Christmas lighting projects throughout downtown were supported by the Carolinian Affairs Office, PDM Promoters, and Team PDI.

SIDEBAR

USDA to visit NMC next year

By DENNIS B. CHAN
dennis_chan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

U.S. Department of Agriculture area director Joseph Diego has confirmed his visit to the Northern Marianas College on Jan. 21, 2015, according to regent William Torres, who hopes USDA is the route via which the college would push through with its campus reconstruction.

"We need to act on facility financing," he said yesterday. He added the college would essentially "duplicate" how Guam colleges used USDA funds for their campus improvements.

This month USDA awarded the University of Guam with a $21.7 million loan for renovation and expansion of its student services center and for a new engineering building. The department also awarded $5 million to the Guam Community College for renovations and expansions to a couple of its campus buildings.

UOG has also previously availed of loan programs for its facilities. The university has borrowed $13.5 million for 40 years at 4.5 percent interest, and pays this debt with an annual $200,000, along with committed money from Guam legislature and its own internal revenue sources.

Torres called UOG's $200,000 a year repayment "really low." He said, "You cannot beat" this financing rate, and added that his subcommittee on facilities would report on and recommend USDA for facility funding.

The next Board of Regents meeting is scheduled for this Thursday.

On Dec. 5, the committee invited stakeholders from the different areas of government for their input on facility financing and alternative energy.

According to an attendance list, representatives from the Commonwealth Developmental Authority, Department of Public Works, and Office of Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan, as well as Rep. Ramon I. Tebuteb were present at that meeting.

Torres said he had hoped to receive input from the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., because options like alternative energy are "no longer something you decide on afterwards."

He said a facility plan would have to incorporate alternative energy from the get go. This would result in "huge savings" for the college, he said.

The college has not undergone major reconstruction since it was built on or about 1955 as a single storey, semi-concrete hospital.

BOE's King pushes for more meetings on instructional and student services

By DENNIS B. CHAN
dennis_chan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A CNMI State Board of Education member would like more focus from the board on instructional and student services.

Denise Tanya King, the board member from Rota, expressed her "dismay and utter frustration" at a canceled instructional services and assessment committee meeting due to a lack of quorum last week. King is chairperson of ISA.

"I scheduled a meeting two weeks ago, only to come yesterday morning to find out that there would not be a quorum and therefore the meeting was cancelled," she told the board.

"This was not the first time, and whenever I ask questions or require documents, I am always questioned about my requests and this makes my job increasingly difficult."

She cited another board committee that seems to hold regular meetings.

"If we are truly about 'Students First,' I don't understand why there is a preoccupation with FPA [Fiscal and Personnel Affairs]. We have FPA over and over and over again when the heart and soul of the school system is instruction services and curriculum."

"I ask that the next time, perhaps I will not be the chair of the ISA [committee], that perhaps we take it more seriously because if we cannot provide the services for our kids that they need, then we should our change our motto," she said.

In an interview, King was largely reticent about the comments she made to the board that day. She indicated that what she wanted to express was spoken to the board.

She did not clarify what documents she had requested. If there was an item she wanted expedited or discussed at an ISA meeting, it was the current "correlation between high school graduation requirements and common core students," she said.

King would not elaborate if the cancelled meetings had anything to do with her being from Rota. When asked, she said, "Maybe yes, maybe no."

The board is expected to elect a new lineup next year. Right now, Herman Guerrero is chairperson, Lucy Blanco-Maratita is vice chair, and Janice Tenorio is secretary/treasurer. The other board members are King and Mary Lou S. Ada.

Kagman High warns of fake fundraiser

Kagman High School wants to inform the community of a fraudulent fundraising ploy that was discovered yesterday afternoon.

"We were informed that someone in the Saipan community is fraudulently selling tickets on behalf of the KHS 2015 senior class for a luau dinner at Fiesta Resort on Dec. 18 2014. KHS senior class is not involved in this fraud and wants to warn the public. If anyone has been approached to buy or has purchased this fraudulent ticket scam, please contact the police authorities and report it right away," according to a statement from the school issued by vice principal Leila Staffler. ***(PR)***

Veterans Choice Cards out already in the CNMI

By JAYSON CAMACHO
jayson_camacho@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A card that will make healthcare access easier for all veterans living in the CNMI is either in their mailboxes already or coming to them within this month, according to the U.S Department of Veterans Affairs' website.

According to the VA, the Veterans Choice Card allows an eligible veteran to access non-VA health care providers for up to three years, based either on the distance a veteran lives from a VA facility, or if he or she is experiencing wait-times beyond the 30-day standard.

The 30-day standard applies when the veteran cannot schedule an appointment within the "wait-time goals" of the Veterans Health Administration, or the date medically determined by their physician.

This means veterans here in the CNMI can use their Choice Cards to avail of the services of other healthcare providers that are not deemed a VA facility.

Ruth Coleman, VA's Pacific Islands Health Care System' Saipan Veterans Clinic administrator, said that one of their patients has confirmed that he already has his Veterans Choice Card.

"Several have probably already received their Choice Cards but one thing they need to know is that it involves a co-payment and doesn't fully cover the whole payment, especially if it is not a VA facility," she said.

Coleman said they have been seeing their veteran patients well within the 30-day standard.

Those who are eligible are those enrolled in VA health care on or before Aug. 1, 2014, or be eligible to enroll as a recently discharged combat veteran within the 5-year window of eligibility.

They are also eligible if their residence is more than 40 miles from the closest VA health care facility or faces a geographic challenge for travelling to a VA facility.

The Choice Card also does cost sharing. If an eligible veteran has another health-care plan, VA will be secondarily responsible for the costs related with non-service connected care and services furnished to eligible veterans through the choice card or program and primarily responsible for service-connected care.

The next date of distribution for the choice cards will be in January.

Chamorro historian is UOG fall commencement speaker on Dec. 21

Dr. Lawrence J. Cunningham, an historian, educator and woodcarver, will be the featured speaker at the University of Guam fall 2014 commencement ceremonies this Sunday, Dec. 21 at the UOG Calvo Field House.

Cunningham spent 25 years teaching Social Studies and Science classes at Agat Junior High, Inarajan Junior High School, Agat/Santa Rita High School and Oceanview High School. As a junior high school teacher, he helped to develop the Exploring Guam class for 9th graders. This was an early model for teaching Guam Natural and Social History before Chamorro Week was developed.

"Dr. Cunningham is an early advocate of teaching Guam's natural and social history with a particular focus on Ancient Chamorro society," said UOG president Dr. Robert Underwood. "His published works serve as the basic texts for researchers and his perspectives and insights have increased our understanding about Guam for the past 40 years."

After retiring from the Guam Department of Education in 1993, he worked at the University of Guam in a variety of capacities including: research associate at the Richard F. Taitano Micronesian Area Research Center (MARC), assistant professor of history and faculty advisor for the Traditional Seafaring Society.

Cunningham has written many Marianas history articles for newspapers, magazines and academic journals. His research of the effects of expository and narrative prose on student achievement and attitudes toward textbooks was published by The Journal of Experimental Education and reported in the fifth and sixth editions of Educational Research by Walter R. Borg and Meredith D. Gall.

Cunningham

He has authored the following books: Ancient Chamorro Kinship Organization, 1984; Ancient Chamorro Society, 1992; and co-authored Guam A Natural History, 2001; A History of Guam, 2001 and Micronesian Texts for the K-12 Reader: A Selection Guide, 2002.

Cunningham is also known as L. Joseph, the woodcarver. His ifet wood creations, that frequently depict local legends, have been the official gift of Guam to the heads of state of several countries, including the President of the United States.

University of Guam fall 2014 commencement ceremonies will be held beginning at 2pm on Sunday, Dec. 21, 2014 at the UOG Calvo Field House.

To read Dr. Cunningham's full bio, visit the UOG website at www.uog.edu/fall2014-commencement. ***(UOG)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

MHS TOURISM CLASS TOURS MVA

The Marianas High School Hospitality & Tourism Class of Tyce Mister visit the Marianas Visitors Authority on Dec. 11, 2014, to learn more about the work of the tourism office from MVA Marketing Manager Bruce Bateman, far right.

Maria Luz Diagro
P.O. Box 500744
Saipan, MP 96950

Pro Se,

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN RE THE GUARDIANSHIP OF **Margarita Bocago** An Incompetent, by **Maria Luz Diagro** Petitioner,	))))))))	FCD-GU CIVIL ACTION NO. 14-0547 **NOTICE OF HEARING**

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a Petition for Appointment of Guardianship for the above-named by Maria Luz Diagro, Petitioner, was filed with the above-entitled Honorable Court and is open for review at the office of the Clerk of Court of the said Court in Susupe, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

A HEARING of said petition for Guardianship will be held at the above-entitled Honorable Court at Guma Hustisia Building, Susupe, Saipan, NMI, before Kenneth L. Govendo on the 30th day of December, 2014 at 9:00 A.M. or as soon thereafter.

Patrick V. Diaz
Clerk of Court
/s/ Deputy Clerk of Court

LAW OFFICES OF S. JOSHUA BERGER
D' TORRES BUILDING. GARAPAN
P.O. Box 504340
SAIPAN, MP 96950
Phone: (670) 235-8060 Fax: 235-8070

Attorney for Plaintiff

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

ISLA FINANCIAL SERVICES, INC., Plaintiff, v. FRANCES C. QUICHOCHO Defendant.	)))))))	CIVIL ACTION NO.: 14-0206 **SUMMONS (For Publication)**

TO: FRANCES C. QUICHOCHO

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file with the Superior Court any Answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is given to you herewith, within twenty-one (21) days after the fourth publication, and to deliver or mail a copy of your Answer to the Law Offices of S. Joshua Berger, Plaintiff's attorney, whose address is Second Floor, D'Torres Building, Garapan, P. O. Box 504340, Saipan, MP 96950, as soon as practicable after filing your Answer.

Your Answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at Susupe, Saipan. It may be prepared and signed for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice.

If you fail to answer in accordance with this Summons, judgment by default may be taken against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint.

By Order of the above Court:

DATED: November 18, 2014

/s/ Adelpha Kapileo
CLERK OF COURT

Second Publication

JENNIFER DOCKTER
LAW OFFICE OF F. MATTHEW SMITH, LLC
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Facsimile No.: (670) 234-7256

Attorney for Petitioners.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In the Matter of the Adoption of JOSEPH FRANCISCO DELA CRUZ WHITE, a male minor child. and JOSEPH F. JOHN WHITE and MARIA TORRES WHITE Petitioners.	]]]]]]]]]]]	FCD Adoption Action No. 14-0520 **NOTICE OF HEARING ON PETITION FOR ADOPTION** Date: December 29, 2014 Time: 1:30 p.m. Judge: Honorable Kenneth L. Govendo

Notice is hereby given that a verified petition was filed in the above-entitled court for the petition for adoption of Joseph Francisco Dela Cruz White, by the petitioners. The original petition is available for review at the Office of the Clerk of Court at Susupe, Saipan.

A hearing of the above-entitled matter will be held on **Monday, December 29, 2014 at 1:30 p.m.,** at the Guma Hustisia, Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Dated this 5th day of December, 2014.

/S/
JENNIFER DOCKTER (F0465)
Attorney for Petitioners

Daniel T. Guidotti
MARIANAS PACIFIC LAW LLC
2nd Floor, J.E. Tenorio Building
Middle Road, Gualo Rai
P.O. Box 506057
SAIPAN, MP 96950
TEL: (670) 233-0777
FAX: (670) 233-0776

Court-appointed Trustee

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

CHO, SEONG JEO, Plaintiff, -v- PARK JAE HYUN, et al. Defendants.	)))))))	**CIVIL ACTION NO. 13-0161** **NOTICE OF HEARING**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Commonwealth Superior Court will hold a hearing to determine claims to surplus funds delivered to the Court arising out of foreclosure of Tract No. H 246 in the above-captioned matter. On September 14, 2014, the Court appointed the Trustee of record, Daniel T. Guidotti of Marianas Pacific Law LLC, whose mailing address is P.O. Box 506057, Saipan, MP 96950 to assist the Court with determining entitlement to the surplus funds.

The hearing in this matter is set for **February 10, 2015 at 1:30 p.m.** in courtroom 220 of the Superior Court, Susupe, Saipan.

All persons having claims to these should file their claims with the Trustee and the Superior Court as soon as possible, but in any event, no later than December 31, 2015.

PUBLIC NOTICE

In accordance with the "Open Government Act", the Public School System State Board of Education, through their Special Education State Advisory Panel (SESAP), is hereby serving notice to the general public that it will hold its 1st Quarter Meeting on Thursday, December 18, 2014, 5:00pm to 7:00pm at the Board of Education Conference Room, Susupe Saipan. This meeting is open to the public, interested individuals are welcome.

AGENDA

I. Preliminary Matters
- a) Roll Call
- b) Presence of a Quorum
- c) Adoption of Agenda
- d) Adoption of Minutes
  - January 09, 2014
  - May 29, 2014
  - August 27, 2014
  - September 25, 2014
  - October 23, 2014

II. Annual Performance Report – Target Setting

III. SESAP Bylaws - Revisit

IV. Miscellaneous

V. Adjournment

In compliance with the American Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals who wish to attend this meeting, but require accessibility such as large print or sign language interpreters must call 237-3029. Several days notice is necessary to allow organizers ample time to make necessary arrangements.

/S/ Dexter Apatang
Chairperson

/S/ Suzanne Lizama
Director, Special Education Program

Paid for by IDEA, Part B Funds

Statue unveiling delayed in Guam village

HAGATNA, Guam (AP)— Officials in a Guam village postponed the unveiling of a statue of a Filipino revolution hero after residents protested.

A life-size statue of Apolinario Mabini was scheduled to be unveiled Monday in Asan at a new concrete monument near the Asan-Maina mayor's office.

Asan-Maina Mayor Margaret Blas said she would proceed as planned to sign an "Agreement on Friendship and Cooperation" with the Philippine city of Tanauan, Mabini's hometown.

Guam's Philippine Consulate General Marciano de Borja said the statue was picked for Asan to honor the village that hosted Mabini and the other Filipino exiles from 1901 to 1903.

"We stand by our intention for this project, which is for the Mabini statue to be the symbol of the friendship and cooperation that we seek to establish between the village of Asan and the city of Tanauan," said de Borja in a statement.

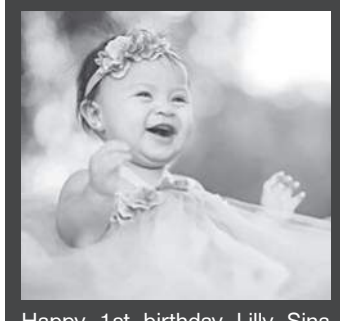
Protesters have said they were not informed of the project. They also questioned whether Mabini had a strong connection to their village.

The consulate general said he respected the opinion of residents and the unveiling would be postponed until the issue was settled.

A plaque commemorating Mabini's stay in Guam has been in place at the War in the Pacific National Historical Park in Asan for years. The life-size statue at the federal park was not possible to install because of the federal government's lengthy and tedious application process, according to Blas.

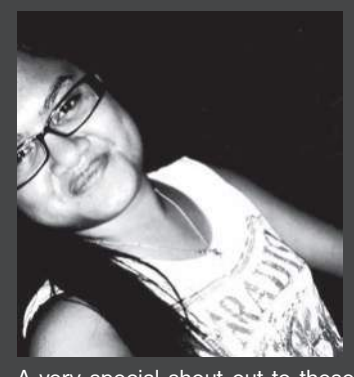
Students at a school in Mabini's hometown donated the statue. The cost of its monument was covered by contributions from residents and businesses on Guam with Philippine ties, according to the consulate.

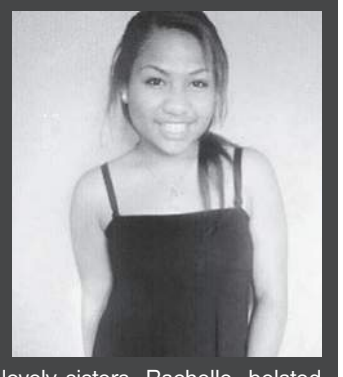
BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUTS



Happy 1st birthday Lilly Sina dela Cruz Rosario! You are the greatest blessing in our lives. We hope you know just how much you are loved, today and always. From Daddy, Mommy and family.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO





A very special shout out to these lovely sisters, Rachelle, belated happy 15th birthday, and to Richelle, happy 21st birthday! We love you both and wish you nothing but happiness and many, many more birthdays to come! God bless you both! Greetings come from all of the troops at the Mansion…. + 2 @ SV.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

SPECIAL AWARDEES

JAYSON CAMACHO

Dave Bryan Odicta is presented with the Leadership Award during the That's My Boy competition held Saturday at the Royal Taga Hall of the Saipan World Resort. The event was a presentation by the United Filipino Organizations.

JAYSON CAMACHO

Jeroen Montenejo is named the winner of the Best in Talent, Best in Formal Wear, and Star of the Night awards.

JAYSON CAMACHO

John Moises Justo is Mr. Charity.

JAYSON CAMACHO

Jan Dumagan is Docomo Pacific's Spirit Award winner.

JAYSON CAMACHO

Bryan Bravo is Mr. Personality.

JAYSON CAMACHO

Lyndon M. Digno wins both the Best in Smile and Photogenic Award.

JAYSON CAMACHO

Donato Santiago is Mr. Friendship.

Delta named top airline by BTN readers for 4th year

» Airline first to be ranked No. 1 by corporate travel managers four years in a row
» Delta voted highest in all 10 categories

ATLANTA--Corporate travel managers rated Delta Air Lines No. 1 in this year's Business Travel News Annual Airline Survey for the fourth consecutive year. This year's honor marks the first time a carrier has earned top ranking four years in a row.

The No. 1 ranking in the BTN Annual Airline Survey further validates Delta's approach to exceeding customer expectations through its industry-leading operational reliability and thoughtful continuous upgrades to products and services.

"Recognition from corporate travel managers for the hard work and commitment of the entire team of Delta's 80,000 worldwide employees is important validation that we continue to lead the industry for our customers," said Ed Bastian, Delta's President. "Delta's culture of hospitality, continuous improvement and unwavering dedication to be thoughtful in making travel better resonates with business travelers who depend on us to keep raising the bar on service."

The airline ranked first among carriers in all 10 categories, with significant year-over-year gains in each and scoring particularly high in key areas of the survey, including: Value of Relationships with Account Managers and Sales Representatives; Quality of Customer Service; and Networks, Airline Partnerships and Frequencies.

"We congratulate Delta on its historic accomplishment of being selected by the Business Travel News subscribers four years in a row to receive our highest honor in this year's Annual Airline Survey," said Louis Magliaro, Group publisher – The BTN Group. "Delta is the first airline in our survey's 17-year history to capture top honors four times in a row, which clearly demonstrates the efforts of the Delta team's efforts to be recognized by industry professionals across all survey categories."

The BTN Survey is voted on by corporate travel managers, who are key influencers of business travel decisions. Participating airlines surveyed include American, Southwest, United and US Airways.

Delta Air Lines serves nearly 165 million customers each year. This year, Delta was named the 2014 Airline of the Year by Air Transport World magazine and was named to FORTUNE magazine's 50 Most Admired Companies, in addition to being named the most admired airline for the third time in four years. ***(Delta)***

FSM citizens can apply to US Service Academies

The FSM Department of Foreign Affairs is currently accepting applications for the Class of 2019 at each of the United States Service Academies: the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado; the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland; the Military Academy at West Point, New York; and the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut.

To apply you must be an FSM citizen, at least 17 years of age but no more than 23 on July 1 of admission year. Applicants must not have a legal obligation to support children, and if female, must not be pregnant.

Copies of high school and college transcripts will be required. The applicant must have his or her SAT or ACT Test Results, and the results from the TOEFL test.

- www.usma.edu - West Point, New York
- www.usna.edu - Annapolis, Maryland
- www.cga.edu - New London, Connecticut
- www.usafa.af.mil- Colorado Springs, Colorado

For deadlines and more information please contact Joyce Perman at the FSM Department of Foreign Affairs, jnperman74@gmail.com. ***(U.S. Embassy Kolonia)***

PSS awarded $15,000 NGA grant

By DENNIS B. CHAN
dennis_chan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Public School System has been awarded a $15,000 grant from the National Governor's Association to participate in a project called "Principal Effectiveness," according to Education Commissioner Dr. Rita Sablan, who announced the grant at a CNMI State Board of Education meeting last week.

The project is an effort to review policies regarding principal effectiveness in school districts, she said. The CNMI is one of the several states that have been identified to participate.

PSS will be working with Sarah Silverman, NGA's program director for its education division, she said. The commissioner will establish a committee with the BOE chair and other PSS officials and principals.

Their work will include reviewing some of the data relative to "who we have in place in the Public School System" as well as PSS' regulations and policies, she said.

NGA'S Silverman leads projects on teacher and leader effectiveness, according to NGA, which includes teacher and principal performance management and personnel systems and connections between early childhood and K-12 education.

According to NGA, she also helps state leaders identify and implement performance management strategies that ensure all students have access to high quality education.

NGA focuses on priority issues and deals collectively with its governors on matters of public policy and governance at the state and national levels, according to its website.

BEACH CLEANUP
Employees of Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan perform a cleanup at the Makaka Beach last Saturday, Dec. 13. A total of 29 volunteers filled eight trash bags with trash that weighed approximately 60 lbs. Half of the volunteers removed seaweeds from the swimming area and moved them farther and away from the area.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
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MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Life isn't perfect. Deal with it

Life is full of unpleasant events and lousy surprises, and many of them are beyond remedy. Most people learn that, often, you just have to suck it up and move on. You can waste a lot of time and energy trying to undo unfair setbacks, and you may not undo them anyway.

But not everybody has learned the lesson. Some apparently think the world should be arranged to avoid doing them any injustice, big or small. Not only do they think it, they insist on it. And about all they usually accomplish is to impress the rest of us with their overbearing self-absorption.

A couple of weeks ago, Frederick A. Douglass High School in Oklahoma City played a state quarterfinal playoff game against Locust Grove. With 1:04 left in the game, a Douglass receiver caught a pass and scampered for what looked to be a go-ahead touchdown. But a Douglass coach running down the sideline got in the way of a referee, and the ref threw a flag. The play was called back, and Locust Grove hung on for a 20-19 victory.

The only problem was that the ref made a mistake. Instead of nullifying the touchdown, he should have assessed a 5-yard penalty on the next play. The Oklahoma Secondary Schools Activities Association acknowledged the error and apologized, but it said its rules didn't allow for a protest. So the regrettable matter was closed.

But the people in charge of the Oklahoma City public schools decided the outcome was a historic tragedy that demanded redress. They filed a lawsuit insisting on a do-over of the last 64 seconds or of the entire game, court's choice. A judge granted a temporary restraining order barring Locust Grove from playing its next game.

In the end, though, the judge came to his senses and rejected the request. If he ordered a replay, District Judge Bernard M. Jones II wrote, he might "usher in a new era of robed referees and meritless litigation due to disagreement with or disdain for decisions of gaming officials." What he could have said was: Grow up, people. Nobody died. It's a game, for Pete's sake.

But if there were a prize for Most Overwrought Complaint About a Petty Offense, the Oklahoma City school officials might have come in second. They would have their hands full competing with Benjamin Edelman, a professor at Harvard Business School who, after getting a takeout order from a Chinese restaurant, was horrified to discover that he had been overcharged by $4 on his four items.

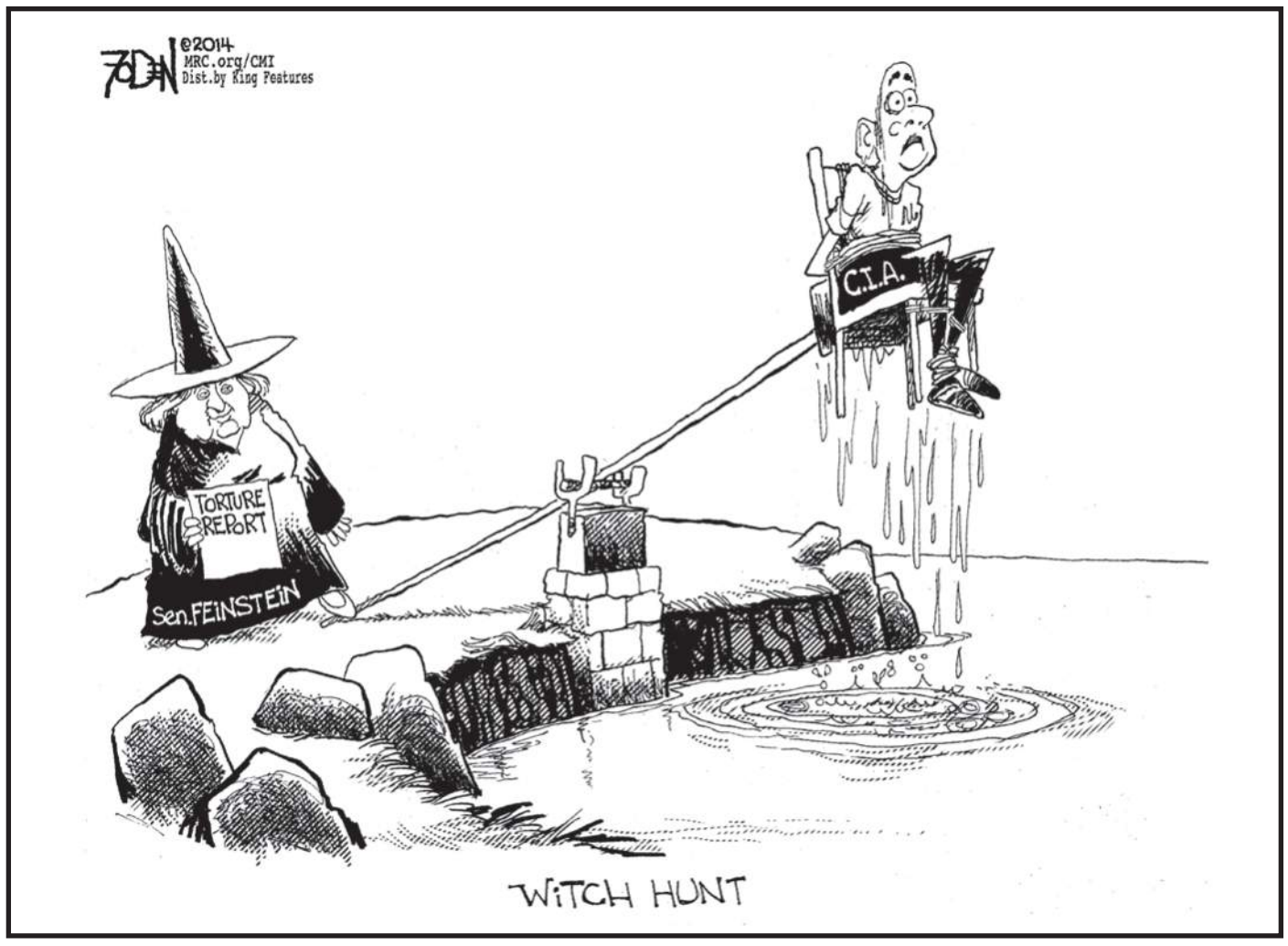
Most customers would have contacted the establishment and asked for a $4 refund. But not our professor.

He promptly fired off an email to the owner demanding an explanation, rejected the one he received (the website prices had not been updated) and demanded a refund of no less than $12, under "the approach provided under the Massachusetts consumer protection statute, wherein consumers broadly receive triple damages for certain intentional violations." Even after the restaurant agreed to give him $12, Edelman held out the threat of legal action.

Manager Ran Duan, who came here from China at age 3, was clearly eager to appease the unhappy customer. "I have worked so hard to make my family proud and to elevate our business," he told Boston.com. "It just broke my heart."

But after seeing himself torched on social media, Edelman

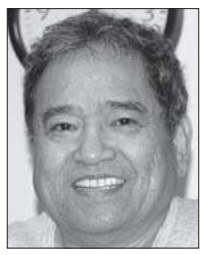
See LIFE on Page 11



Dong Bei Winter Wonderland

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime Vergara previously taught at SVES in the CNMI. A peripatetic pedagogue, he last taught in China but makes Honolulu, Shenyang, and Saipan home. He can be reached at pinoypanda2031@aol.com.



We started with a fine day that got rudely interrupted by the white stuff, coming down enough to cover the ground white. That's our third this December since the second snow day last week that put on hold my scheduled health and errand saunter out.

The fluff looks like goose feathers descending without a hurry, a sight to behold by this essentially tropical heart. Oh, places I've lived before includes the prairies of Canada, around the windy city of Chicago and the Great Lakes, Maine's Bar Harbor to the beltway of D.C. and the swath from the Potomac to the Pecos of the Southwest, so snow is hardly novel to my experience. It is just that watching it from the warmth of a floor heated by piped water coursed underneath ceramic floor in a gated community apartment of the suddenly resurgent China into the world of comfort and ease is a bit too rich for my plebeian blood.

Four years ago, with Saipan garment factory workers contacts awakened to the fact that they invested an enormous amount for a USA address, nowhere close to sunny California, which they could not easily go to past INS, had to work hard and under austere living conditions for three years just to recoup investment, only to see years of savings in one mistaken palm itch at Tinian's casino. (I've written of slides into drugs, prostitution and despair previously so I shall not do an encore since this is a reflection on winter.)

Anyway, my host family's son was to enter Shenyang Aerospace University on an aeronautic engineering major so I applied to teach after the CNMI PSS would not have me back. A year later, figuring out why the son never bothered to come to the faculty housing, I discovered that he went to another school *sans* mother and grandfather's knowledge or consent.

I was hired to lecture on micro and macro economics to foreign students from third and first world countries and I got excited about sharing my experience in development on the social process of economics, politics, and culture. The head of the Economics department, however, just wanted econometrics and perusing textbooks on the algebraic equations. I decided that the discipline was observed in the academic setting but irrelevant to actual socioeconomic policies.

Shunted to the English department, I sounded like a native English speaker for students to listen to. I taught students how to live a human life rather than how to make a living, and I found a new audience of those who were relieved not to worry about cramming to pass standardized test but more concerned about their ability to learn.

Communal China struck me on the first snowstorm on campus. I discovered that each class had an assigned space to clear after snow blankets the area, and ladies and gentlemen from one-child-families who would not raise a pinkie to clear the dining table at home suddenly shoveled snow, broke encrusted ice, and enabled the smooth flow of pedestrian traffic. There was posturing and prancing around in the doing but they did get the job done.

The practicality of clearing the pedestrian walkways struck me as more than just making work. This gained credence in my walk to my old dwelling where I skirt around the university campus on underutilized back roads before getting to the main thoroughfare. The snowplow took some time working the back roads into its schedule but workers pronto manually swept a clear sidewalk for pedestrian traffic. Foot traffic took priority over cars, a refreshing practice I hope communal China will not lose.

Two Sundays before Christmas, business went into high gear to get the public in a shopping mode. One of every 10 folks on the sidewalk walked around with a pointed but droopy red hat in full regalia of red felt white-fur trimmed attire, promoting something. I stopped a few times to bellow my best St. Nick's "Ho! Ho! Ho!" to the hired help, not sure if they knew who they were supposed to be portraying. The whole three block commercial place looked very Christmas-y *sans* the manger scene and Macy's parade, but the lit trees were fitted with all the trimmings like Chicago's loop of memory.

In our neighborhood, right around the lit bulb-strung former summer fountain, a mother, a grandma, and a 2-year-old boy tried out a new remote-controlled dump truck equipped with a front loader that loads snow balls. The mother was having fun trying out the toy while grandma tried to cheer the young boy to participate. He did not look the least curious at all. He asked instead to be carried on mama's back, ending the outing.

I discovered that sleepy heads in my university classes spent hours in dark and crowded computer rooms where they play their DotA *(*e.g., *League of Legends)* hours on end. It would not surprise me if our bored young *nouveau riche* heads that direction.

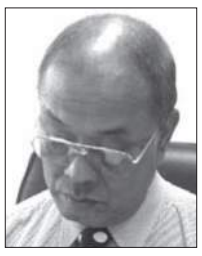
That's probably why I still teach in TeCHinASIA where abundant technology in life is short on promise. Me, I still gaze fascinated at the white fluff that descends from the sky and the wonder of me wondering.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Is that you, Stupid?

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune *and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands.*



Tried digging down deep to understand why we do things the way we do. Is it an islander's way of avoiding hard and difficult issues, thus the quick trip to the land of grand *mañana*?

Disappointing as it may be, perhaps it's human nature veering off anything challenging or matters that may involve a certain hardship or struggle. Understandable! But haven't we learned from the lessons of recent history? Avoiding hard issues seems universal.

Dr. Gruber: Dr. Jonathan Gruber, a famed MIT economist, finally admitted to grand dishonesty before a U.S. House of Representatives congressional oversight committee on his role in the infamous Obamacare health law. What a way to secure the uncontested title and trophy as Mr. Stupid!

He was the chief architect of a law destined to crumble even more beginning next year when more Americans find their health premiums skyrocketing while displacing millions more. No, Dr. Gruber. Americans are not stupid. Though you're the master of deception with Obama playing second fiddle, you both are the epitome of deception and stupidity!

Partner in crime: The lawlessness of the Obama presidency is revealed even clearer in his hell-bent determination to push though his executive amnesty at all cost. He's basically legislating at will an authority solely reserved for Congress. Bringing in 11 million illegal immigrants displaces some five million jobless workers across the country. Sadly, many have given up looking for jobs, sir!

The repudiation of Obama's policies by most Americans in the recent midterm election doesn't seem to drive some sense into the neurons of the man at the WH. He defies it and would do anything for politics or in hopes of securing another opportunity for a Democratic president. After he's ruined every iota of it by his one too many lies at the teleprompter?

Sir, if I may also admonish you: the inaudible voice of Americans across the fruited plain isn't a sentiment of stupidity. You cradle our enemies while scolding your own for speaking their minds? Such reckless attitude is laced with stupidity, sir!

Long-term illnesses: The indigenous people are born into two categories of illnesses: self-inflicted (lifestyle) and genetics. I don't know if Type II diabetes is born from lifestyle or genetics, but its upward spiral and subsequent renal failure crash landing into dialysis are definitely alarming. The same goes with heart issues that fall into the two categories**.**

That heart problems fall into either lifestyle or genetics make the latter case most urgent by way of identifying families most vulnerable to stroke. I've seen how a patient in the ER was told by the doctor "don't move" or else.

As soon as he moved (perhaps to use the restroom) he fell to the floor. Doctors and nurses did everything possible to revive him. He was instantly a goner! I heard stupid entering the door three years ago and how fortunate this soul to have paid close attention to its less than welcome visit.

Budget brinkmanship

Sen. Harry Reid succeeded in passing the contentious $1.1 trillion spending bill. The measure wedged even Democrats who end up looking like Republicans or vice versa.

Interesting how Speaker John Boehner would navigate retaining his seat after he disappointed his own colleagues in the recent budget slugfest.

And there was Obama donning the role of a grand cheerleader at Pennsylvania Avenue wagging his tail, howling "compromise, compromise, compromise." He should have worked the aisles when his party was in control. But like most things he's spouted, he walked away unsure of his own statement.

With Republicans taking over both chambers, does it mean we could get some more CIP funds for huge projects now waiting in the wings or would it a frustrating, protracted process?

Other issues...

The whopping drop in the price of crude oil by 42 percent is itself a double-edged sword. It's good for family pocketbooks while it portends an impending global recession. The latter is much more difficult to overcome and hits every corner of the global community heavily and adversely too.

Recalled the Asian crisis that brought tourism here close to its deathbed. It adversely affected the ability of Asian countries to engage in healthy trade. The slow screeching halt even landed on our shores while we were caught with our pants down. But then we usually are caught in this situation, right?

■■■

And we have another five years to retain and sustain small businesses here who make up the bulk of private industry. After 2019, do we say *adios* to these folks who share lifetime savings to help the NMI move out of its persistent fiscal crisis? This is where vision and leadership come into play, if we still have any relics of it left in our exhausted bags of *mañana*.

■■■

An atheist and an agnostic friend said he wouldn't be observing Christmas Day. I politely acknowledge his assertion. He said God is a state of mind. I pointed him to the Holy Bible and told him to start from the beginning "like God did." Not in the islands, my friend, where it still is *Felis Noche Buena*! I asked if he's working on Christmas Day. He answered in the negative. Sorry, Christmas break is only for Christians, sir!

■■■

The person hides behind the alias True and Tried and admonishes that I exit "bitterness." Obviously, the person has no coconuts or gonads to exit his or her hermit crab shell to engage in healthy debate on issues putting a name to his/her views. The only thing that truly depicts his/her character is the alias True and Tried in real time Spinelessness!

Put a name to it, my friend, lest you'd be running around town with your tail permanently tucked between your legs. Never lost the battle and definitely look forward to watching the issuance of the dreaded orange jumpsuit in six months time for some of your so-called "leadership."

LITERARY NOOK

The first day of Hanukkah

By JOSEPH 'PEPE BATBON' B. CONNOLLY
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Yesterday, Dec. 16, was the first day of Hanukkah. I wrote these short poems to explain the holiday to my students here in the CNMI. Hanukkah is a Hebrew verb meaning "to dedicate."

Jewish historian Josephus tells us it is about the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem after it was desecrated by Antiochus IV around 200 B.C. The Hebrews won the battle to reclaim the Temple and stopped fighting on the 25th of their month of Kislev. The story of the oil lamp staying lit for eight days is a legend. It is not in the Hebrew Bible. These haiku/senryu that follow tell the basic story of Hanukkah and how it is celebrated today. Gelt is money, latkes are potato pancakes, and a dreidel is a toy spinning top. The menorah is a candle holder that holds eight candles. Hanukkah is also known as the Festival of Lights.

temple lamp lit
for one night stayed lit for eight
so we remember

eight branch candle lit
temple rededication
twenty five Kislev

first night one candle
light a new candle each night
a blessing each day

Hanukkah is eight
candles in the menorah
gelt, latkes, and song

festival of lights
say, "Nas gadol haya shom."
eight successive days

spin the top now and
sing. «Sivivon sov sov sov.»
spin dreidel spin

Judas Macabee said
a great miracle happened here
Hanukkah time

menorah aglow
it›s a Jewish holiday
Happy Hanukkah

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Thank you to all involved in 3rd Candle Lighting Remembrance Program

The Compassionate Friends of Saipan would like to thank all people who planned, donated to, attended, supported or participated in our Candle Lighting Remembrance Program on Sunday, Dec. 14.

This was the 3rd annual Candle Lighting Remembrance Program on Saipan, and was a part of The Compassionate Friends' ("TCF," http://www.compassionatefriends.org/home.aspx) 18th Annual Worldwide Candle Lighting Service. Approximately 140 candles were lit in remembrance of our loved ones who were "gone too soon." Over 60 children and siblings were honored with a candle and gentle memories, and another 15 attendees were there to honor and remember their loved ones.

With much appreciation, we would like to specifically thank the CNMI Department of Lands and Natural Resources, Division of Parks & Recreation, *Marianas Variety, Saipan Tribune*, Tina Palacios and Sorensen Media Saipan, Jillian Angeline and KSPN Channel 2, Rovel Tolentino Caberos and KWAW - Magic 100.3 FM, Docomo Pacific, Larry Lee for his wonderful music, Blossoms Floral Shop, Thomas Lee A. Manglona II and the junior class of Mt. Carmel School for their invaluable assistance, Takeo and Maggie George, the Benjamin family, Lou Kisa, Coconut Scanning Services, Inc., Soroptimist International - Northern Mariana Islands, Reps. Ray Tebuteb, Edmund Villagomez, Anthony Benavente and Antonio Agulto, Bridge Capital, LLC, employees of GPPC, Lynn Corella, John Fraser, Marcia Schultz, Barbara Sher and Lorna Arcega and family.

The program included two video presentations, painstakingly composed by Dr. Nelson Krum; they can be viewed on You Tube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kvWSb-1Oe6Y (slide show of loved ones) and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uHtEeh5jLMs ("Precious Child").

The Compassionate Friends of Saipan is a non-profit self-help organization that offers friendship, understanding and support to family members who have experienced the death of a son, daughter, brother, sister, grandchild or friend, and helps others better assist grieving families. Our monthly meetings are held on the first Thursday of the month, at 6pm in the NMPASI conference room on Middle Road in Gualo Rai. Please contact Jill Derickson, 989-9821, or Donna Krum, 783-0755, or e-mail TCFSaipan@gmail.com if you are interested in further information.

Jill Derickson
Donna Krum
Dr. Nelson Krum
Nicole B. Sablan
Lhet Relata
The Compassionate Friends of Saipan

LIFE

From Page 10

realized he was making himself look like an overeducated jerk and changed his tune. He issued an apology, admitting, "I was very much out of line."

For that, he deserves commendation. Too bad the Oklahoma City school officials were not equally quick to recognize the folly of turning molehills into mountains. All concerned would do well to heed the modern adage: "Don't sweat the small stuff--and it's all small stuff."

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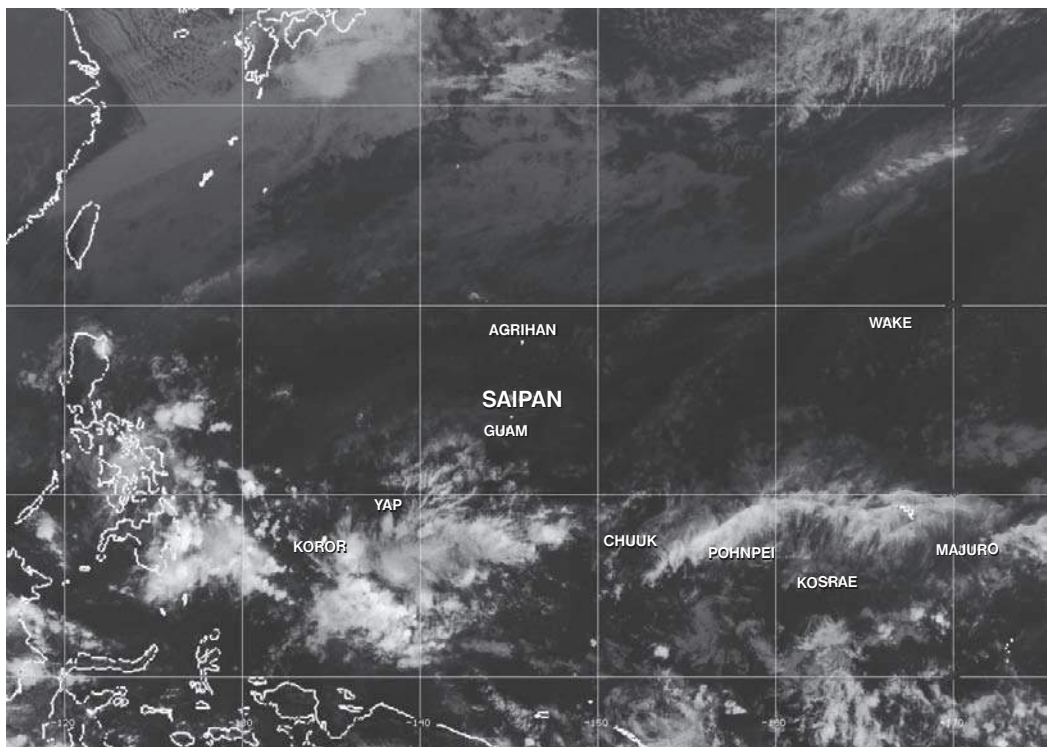
The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. Breezy at times.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. Breezy at times.
▲88° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2014
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A shear line extends west-southwestward from 25N166E to 21N157E then heads westward to beyond 130E at 20N. Cloudiness and patchy rain exist along and up to 200 miles north of this feature. A surface trough well west of Koror is triggering scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms west of a line from 9N131E to 6N133E to 5N132E. A trade-wind disturbance is generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms east of Koror and southeast of Yap within an area bounded by a line from EQ141E to 9N150E to 9N135E to 3N134E back to EQ141E. Trade-wind convergence is generating scattered showers east of Majuro within 150 miles of a line from 7N175E to 9N180E.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

Micronesia

Guam And Rota	Partly Cloudy	▲85	▼80
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲86	▼79
Yap	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼79
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼80
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	▲86	▼79
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼81
Majuro	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼80

Around the Globe

Auckland	Thunderstorms	▲73	▼64
Beijing	Sunny	▲41	▼21
Hong Kong	Sunny	▲61	▼41
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲80	▼70
London	Partly Cloudy	▲45	▼41
Los Angeles	Showers	▲62	▼50
Manila	Mostly Cloudy	▲83	▼73
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	▲72	▼53
Miami	Sunny	▲77	▼59
New York	Rain	▲49	▼44
Osaka	Windy	▲38	▼34
Paris	Fog	▲46	▼42
Pusan	Windy	▲32	▼20
Rome	Rain	▲57	▼48
Salem	Partly Cloudy	▲52	▼38
San Francisco	Rain	▲58	▼52
Seoul	Sunny	▲20	▼ 4
Tokyo	Windy	▲46	▼33
Washington, DC	Rain	▲52	▼42

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Tides

Saipan Harbor

4:12 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.3 Feet
9:16 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.9 Feet
3:30 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
10:50 PM	Today	High Tide:	0.2 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:36 AM	5:50 PM
Thursday	6:36 AM	5:50 PM
Friday	6:37 AM	5:51 PM
Saturday	6:37 AM	5:51 PM
Sunday	6:38 AM	5:52 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	1:51 AM	1:55 PM
Thursday	2:41 AM	2:38 PM
Friday	3:34 AM	3:25 AM
Saturday	4:29 AM	4:16 PM
Sunday	5:27 AM	5:11 PM

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOVEMBER 12, 2014

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA5070	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA5068	8:00am	8:50am	3
UA5068	8:40am	9:30am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
UA5039	2:20pm	4:00pm	6, 7 via Rota
UA5078	3:10pm	4:00pm	1, 5
UA5038	3:10pm	4:00pm	2, 4
UA5040	6:55pm	7:45pm	1, 5
UA5078	8:35pm	9:25pm	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA5044	10:40pm	11:30pm	1, 5

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA5039	2:20pm	2:55pm	6, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA5039	3:25pm	4:00pm	6, 7

SAIPAN-PALAU (ROR)

DL287	6:05am	1:05am+1	2, 6 via NRT

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL287	6:05am	8:40am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6
DL297	4:20pm	7:05pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ604	3:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
7C 3401	4:30pm	8:20pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:10am	6:20am	4, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764A	1:30am	5:30am	4, 7
MU764	1:30am	5:30am	1, 5

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:30am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ606/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA5069/PR111	2:45am	4:50pm	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5070/191	4:15am	7:20am	2, 7 via GUM
UA5070/191	4:15am	9:00am	3, 6 via GUM
UA5070/183	4:15am	8:45pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA5070/183	4:15am	9:10pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
DL287/473	6:05am	9:50pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 6 via NRT
UA5071/PR111	6:40am	4:50pm	3 via GUM
UA5071/PR111	7:15am	4:50pm	1, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5068/183	8:00am	9:50pm	3 via GUM
UA5068/183	8:40am	9:30pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA5068/183	8:40am	9:50pm	1, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5039/183	2:20pm	9:50pm	6, 7 via Rota-GUM
UA5038/183	3:10pm	9:30pm	2 via GUM
UA5078/183	3:10pm	9:30pm	5 via GUM
UA5078/183	3:10pm	9:50pm	1 via GUM
UA5038/183	3:10pm	9:50pm	4 via GUM
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:50pm	Daily via ICN

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

OZ606/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ606/723	2:10am	12:50pm	1 via ICN
OZ606/721	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/723	2:40am	12:50pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA5070/179	4:15am	10:35pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA5068/179	8:00am	10:35pm	3 via GUM
UA5068/179	8:40am	10:35pm	1, 5, 6 via GUM
UA5039/179	2:20pm	10:35pm	6 via Rota-GUM
UA5078/179	3:10pm	10:35pm	1, 5 via GUM
OZ604/749	3:20pm	10:30pm	Daily via ICN

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA5069	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA5071	6:40am	7:30am	3
UA5071	7:15am	8:05am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
UA5039	1:00pm	1:50pm	6, 7
UA5038	1:10pm	2:40pm	2, 4 via Rota
UA5077	1:50pm	2:40pm	1, 5
UA5041	5:35pm	6:25pm	1, 5
UA5077	7:15pm	8:05pm	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA5043	9:20pm	10:10pm	1, 5

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA5038	1:10pm	1:45pm	2, 4

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA5038	2:05pm	2:40pm	2, 4

PALAU (ROR)-SAIPAN

DL298	4:30am	3:00pm	3, 7 via NRT

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily
DL288	8:55pm	1:25am+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
7C 3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ605	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	1:50am+1	3, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:30pm	5:50am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763A	4:30pm	12:30am+1	3, 6
MU763	4:30pm	12:30am+1	4, 7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:55pm	3:10am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ704/603	12:10am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
PR110/UA5041	7:35am	6:25pm	1,5 via GUM
PR110/UA5077	7:35am	8:05pm	3, 6, 7 via GUM
PR110/UA5043	7:35am	10:10pm	1, 5 via GUM
DL172/288	9:40am	1:25am+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 7 via NRT
UA190/5077	9:55am	8:05pm	2, 7 via GUM
UA190/5077	10:00am	8:05pm	3, 6 via GUM
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA184/5071	10:55pm	7:30am+1	3 via GUM
UA184/5071	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5039	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5038	10:55pm	2:40pm+1	4 via GUM-Rota
UA184/5077	10:55pm	2:40pm+1	1 via GUM
UA184/5041	10:55pm	6:25pm+1	1 via GUM
UA184/5077	10:55pm	8:05pm+1	3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5043	10:55pm	10:10pm+1	1 via GUM
UA184/5071	10:59pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM
UA184/5038	10:59pm	2:40pm+1	2 via GUM-Rota
UA184/5077	10:59pm	2:40pm+1	5 via GUM
UA184/5041	10:59pm	6:25pm+1	5 via GUM
UA184/5077	10:59pm	8:05pm+1	2 via GUM
UA184/5043	10:59pm	10:10pm+1	5 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ746/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ750/603	1:10am	2:20pm	Daiily via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ724/605	2:20pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ724/605	2:20pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA180/5071	10:55pm	7:30am+1	3 via GUM
UA180/5071	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 5, 6 via GUM
UA180/5039	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	6 via GUM
UA180/5077	10:55pm	2:40pm+1	1, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA180/5041	10:55pm	6:25pm+1	1, 5 via GUM
UA180/5077	10:55pm	8:05pm+1	3, 6 via GUM
UA180/5043	10:55pm	10:10pm+1	1, 5 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; 7C: Jeju AirETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:00AM	7:15AM	Mon, Tue,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
12:30NN	12:45NN	Daily
1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
12:00NN	12:15NN	Daily
1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO ROTA

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:45AM	8:15AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:00PM	4:30PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

ROTA TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:45PM	5:15PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

Business

Why oil is down by half, what it means for you

NEW YORK (AP)—The price of oil has fallen by nearly half in just six months, a surprising and steep plunge that has consumers cheering, producers howling and economists wringing their hands over whether this is a good or bad thing.

The price of a barrel of oil is just under $56, down from a summer high of $107, and lower than at any time since the U.S. was still in recession in the spring of 2009.

So what's going on? A global imbalance of supply and demand that is rippling across the world economy, for better and worse.

SUPPLIES GO BOOM

Years of high oil prices, interrupted briefly by the recession, inspired drillers around the world to scour the earth's crust for more oil.

They found it.

Since 2008 oil companies in the U.S., for example, have increased production by 70 percent, or 3.5 million barrels of oil per day. To put that in perspective, that increase alone is more than the production of any OPEC member other than Saudi Arabia.

As U.S. production was ramping up, turmoil in the Middle East and North Africa reduced supplies from Libya, Iran and elsewhere. A balance was struck: Increasing supplies from outside of OPEC and from Iraq's recovering oil industry helped meet rising demand around the world as other OPEC supplies waivered.

But now those OPEC supplies look more certain despite continuing turmoil, and those non-OPEC supplies have swamped the market. OPEC estimated last week that the world would need 28.9 million barrels of its oil per day next year, the lowest in more than a decade. At the same time, OPEC countries plan to produce 30 million barrels of oil per day next year. That supply surplus is sending global prices lower.

AP
In this Oct. 30, 2014 file photo, motorist Jerry Reed fills up his tank at a gas station in Atlanta.

DEMAND GOES BUST

Global demand is still expected to grow next year, but by far less than many thought earlier this year. The economies of China, Japan and Western Europe—the top oil consumers after the United States—all appear to be weakening. Oil demand falls when economic growth stalls.

The U.S. is still the world's largest consumer, but more fuel-efficient cars and changing demographics mean demand for oil and gasoline is not increasing. The Energy Department predicts a slight decrease in gasoline demand next year even though the price is expected to be sharply lower and the economy is expected to grow.

THE HAPPY CONSUMERS

For drivers, shippers, airlines and other consumers of fuel, there's nothing not to like about the drop in oil prices.

The national average gasoline price has fallen for 81 straight days to $2.55 a gallon, its lowest level since October of 2009, according to AAA. It's $1.15 a gallon cheaper than its high for the year, saving U.S. households $100 a month as they shop for holiday presents. "Any time gas prices go down that is a good thing," said Randy Daniels, 30, who was shopping recently at the Lenox Square Mall in Atlanta. "An extra 20 or 30 bucks in my pocket goes far."

Diesel and jet fuel prices have also plunged, helping boost the profits and share prices of airlines and shippers. Heating oil is the cheapest it has been in four years, reducing home heating prices just in time for winter for many in the chilly Northeast.

THE WORRIED ECONOMISTS

Falling fuel prices act like a tax cut and help boost consumer spending, which in turn accounts for 70 percent of the U.S. economy. But economists are growing concerned that there are other, more troublesome forces at play.

The depth of oil's plunge could be a signal that the global economy is struggling even more than economists think. A weak global economy could hurt the U.S. economy by reducing exports, employment and spending, which together could outweigh the economic benefits of cheaper fuel.

THE PRODUCERS' PAIN

For oil companies, oil-producing states, and oil-exporting countries, the oil price collapse is painful.

Oil companies generally keep producing oil from wells they've already drilled, but lower prices sharply reduce revenue and force them to cut back spending on new exploration projects. BP announced last week it would try to trim $1 billion in spending next year in a move that analysts say could result in thousands of job cuts.

States that rely on taxes from energy production such as Alaska, North Dakota, Oklahoma and Texas will see lower revenues and some have already had to trim budgets.

Major oil exporters such as Iran, Iraq, Russia and Venezuela rely heavily on revenues from state-owned oil companies to run their governments and are struggling under major budget shortfalls. For example, Bank of America estimates that every $1 drop in the global price of oil costs Venezuela $770 million in annual revenue. Current prices are now $47 below last year's average, putting the country on pace for a $36 billion reduction in revenue.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Ex-Madoff account manager sentenced to 6 years

NEW YORK (AP)—A former account manager for Bernard Madoff was sentenced Monday to six years in prison for her role in his epic multibillion-dollar fraud, ending a series of proceedings for five former employees that resulted in prison terms dramatically below what prosecutors sought. U.S. District Judge Laura Taylor Swain announced the sentence for 53-year-old JoAnn Crupi, calling it "a justly harsh result for someone whose work was so integral to the unspeakable fraud perpetrated by Bernard Madoff." Crupi, of Westfield, New Jersey, said Madoff kept her in the dark, even angrily denouncing her plan to learn more about securities in school.

As Ukraine truce holds, Russia vows economic pain

KIEV, Ukraine (AP)—Fighting in eastern Ukraine between government troops and Russian-backed separatist forces has ground almost to halt. That should be good news for Ukraine, but Russia looks intent to pile on the economic misery. In a detailed op-ed piece Monday, Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev painted a grim forecast of Russian economic blockades ahead as Ukraine embarks on closer integration with Europe. "The Ukrainian government has made its choice. And even if our neighbors have a poor understanding of the ultimate price they will have to pay, that is their right," Medvedev said.

Russia raises key rate to protect ailing economy

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Bank of Russia has raised its key interest rate to 17 percent from 10.5 percent in a desperate move to boost its currency and rescue its troubled economy. The action announced Tuesday in Moscow comes after the ruble's value has sunk roughly 50 percent since January, battered by Western sanctions imposed over the conflict in Ukraine and plunging worldwide oil prices. The falling ruble threatens to escalate Russia's inflation to dangerous levels and paralyze the economy. The central bank's aggressive move illustrated the magnitude of the perils confronting Russia. It reflected fears that the ruble's decline could trigger consumer panic, incite a run on banks and deepen Russia's economic problems.

Korean Air to be sanctioned for nut rage cover-up

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South Korea's transport ministry said Korean Air Lines Co. will face sanctions for pressuring employees to lie during a government probe into the nut rage fiasco that highlighted the tyrannical behavior of a top Korean business family.

The ministry said Tuesday it will also evaluate if the airline's corporate culture poses safety risks after its chairman's daughter Cho Hyun-ah overruled the captain of a flight to force the plane back to the gate in the incident early this month.

Cho, who was head of cabin service at Korean Air, ordered a senior flight attendant off a Dec. 5 flight after she was served macadamia nuts in a bag, instead of on a plate, in what she thought was a breach of service protocol in first class.

Transport ministry director Lee Gwang-hee said Korean Air could face up to 21 days of flight suspensions or a $1.3 million fine for violating aviation law. The punishment will be determined by a separate committee that could decide to increase or lessen it.

Park Chang-jin, the crew member who had to disembark from the plane, later told South Korea's KBS television network that Cho had shamed and insulted crew members. A first-class passenger told Yonhap News Agency that Cho yelled at flight attendants who kneeled before her, pushed one flight attendant's shoulder and threw an object at the cabin wall.

The incident now dubbed "nut rage" hogged headlines around the world and enraged the South Korean public, leading to Cho's removal from all executive roles at the airline.

The 40-year-old and her father apologized last week, but a new furor has erupted over Korean Air's attempt to foil government investigators. Park, the crew member, was visited by Korean Air Lines officials who pressured him to give a sanitized version of events to investigators.

The airline will be punished because Cho and Park lied during the probe and because the captain was negligent in his duties, according to the ministry.

However, the captain won't face any sanction as he was powerless to refuse a member of the family that controls the airline, said Lee, the transport official.

Its investigators found Cho used abusive language to flight attendants but could not ascertain if she used violence. It will file a complaint against Cho with prosecutors later in the day.

Prosecutors earlier launched a separate investigation into the Korean Air case after receiving a complaint from a civic group. Prosecutors summoned Cho to be questioned on Wednesday, according to Yonhap.

STOCK PORTFOLIO

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW	S&P	NASDAQ
17,180.84	1,989.63	4,605.16
-99.99	-12.70	-48.44
-0.58%	-0.63%	-1.04%

EXCHANGE RATES

In U.S. dollar terms

Australian Dollar	1.2158	Hong Kong Dollar	7.7537	Philippine Peso	44.7295
British Pound	0.639	Indian Rupee	63.5018	Singapore Dollar	1.3086
Canadian Dollar	1.1643	Indonesian Rupiah	12811.28	South Korean Won	1087.25
Chinese Yuan	6.1963	Japanese Yen	117.3592	Swiss Franc	0.9642
Euro	0.8029	Malaysian Ringgit	3.4887	Taiwan Dollar	31.3001
		New Zealand Dollar	1.292	Thailand Baht	32.9523

Nation

6 dead, suspect on loose in suburban Philadelphia

PENNSBURG, Pa. (AP)—A man suspected of going to three houses in the Philadelphia suburbs and fatally shooting six people, including his ex-wife and her teenage niece, was at large, and prosecutors said investigators didn't know where he was or how he was getting around.

Police recovered the cellphone and car of Bradley William Stone, who had recently been in court fighting with his ex-wife over custody of their two children. SWAT teams surrounded his Pennsburg home on Monday and pleaded through a bullhorn for him to surrender, but Montgomery County District Attorney Risa Vetri Ferman said it was unclear if he was there.

"As I stand here right now, we do not know where he is," Ferman said at an evening news briefing.

AP

Police move near a home Monday, Dec. 15, 2014, in Souderton, Pa., where a suspect is believed to have barricaded himself inside after shootings at multiple homes.

The shooting rampage started before dawn at the home of Stone's former sister-in-law in Souderton and ended about 90 minutes later at ex-wife Nicole Stone's apartment in nearby Harleysville, Ferman said.

Nicole Stone's sister, Patricia Flick, her sister's husband, Aaron Flick, and the couple's 14-year-old daughter, Nina Flick, were killed in the first wave of violence, discovered just before 8 a.m., Ferman said. Their 17-year-old son, Anthony Flick, was pulled from the home with a head wound and was taken in an armored vehicle and then by helicopter to a Philadelphia hospital for treatment.

Nicole Stone's mother, Joanne Hill, and grandmother Patricia Hill were killed next at their home in nearby Lansdale. Investigators were alerted by a hang-up call to emergency dispatchers, Ferman said.

Nicole Stone's neighbors at the Pheasant Run Apartments in Harleysville said they were awoken around 5 a.m. by the sounds of breaking glass and gunshots coming from her apartment. They said they saw Stone fleeing with their two children and alerted authorities.

"She would tell anybody who would listen that he was going to kill her and that she was really afraid for her life," neighbor Evan Weron said.

The two children Stone took from his ex-wife's house were safe, Ferman said. She did not say anything about what weapon or weapons were used.

Stone, who's white, about 5-foot-10 and 195 pounds, was likely wearing military fatigues and was known to use a cane or walker, but it's possible he did not need them, Ferman said.

Harleysville, Lansdale and Souderton are within a few miles of each other. Police with armored vehicles and rifles moved to Pennsburg after spending several hours outside the Souderton home where several victims were found. Several school districts ordered students and teachers to shelter in place.

Later Monday night, police in neighboring Bucks County swarmed an area outside Doylestown after an attempted carjacking by a man dressed in fatigues and similar in appearance to Stone.

Brad and Nicole Stone married in 2004 and filed for divorce in 2009, court records show. Brad Stone, 35, remarried last year. Nicole Stone, 33, became engaged over the summer, neighbors said.

Police altering tactics after killings, protests

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP)—With tensions running high over the killings of blacks by police, departments around the country are changing policies and procedures to curb the use of deadly force, ease public distrust and protect officers from retaliation.

New York City plans to issue stun guns to hundreds more officers. The Milwaukee department is making crisis-intervention training mandatory. And in Akron, Ohio, police have begun working in pairs on all shifts for their own safety.

Police departments are constantly updating training. But some of the more recent measures have been prompted by rising anger toward police. And in some cases, departments are making sure to let the public know about these changes.

"It's not a mistake or a coincidence that a lot of these departments are publicizing their training or are perhaps revamping their training guidelines and things like that in the wake of these really high-profile incidents," said Kami Chavis Simmons, director of the criminal justice program at the Wake Forest University School of Law in North Carolina and a former federal prosecutor in Washington.

Protests, largely peaceful, have flared across the country after grand juries in recent weeks declined to indict white officers in the fatal shooting of 18-year-old Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, and the chokehold death of Eric Garner in New York City. Both men were black and unarmed.

Lorie Fridell, a criminology professor at the University of South Florida who operates a police training business, said she has received nearly two requests a day from chiefs since protests erupted over the August shooting in Ferguson.

"There's a lot of well-meaning chiefs out there that want to do the right thing, and they are looking for ways that they can address not just use-of-force issues but bias issues," she said.

Two recent police shootings in Ohio started with reports of people with guns: the killing last month of a 12-year-old boy carrying a pellet gun in Cleveland and the death last summer of a 22-year-old man holding an air rifle in a Wal-Mart in suburban Dayton.

In both cases, the officers said they thought the victims had real guns. The officer who shot the 12-year-old resigned from a suburban Cleveland police force in 2012 after his supervisors decided he lacked the maturity to work in their department.

Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine responded by asking the state's police training commission last week to study possible updates in the way officers learn their jobs.

"Every police officer who goes out every day has the right to come home at night," DeWine said. "On the other hand, citizens of the state of Ohio have the right to expect that police officers are correctly trained and vetted before they're put out on the street."

Elsewhere around the country:

■ In Missouri last month, a federal law enforcement team held training for St. Louis-area police, including top commanders from Ferguson, on how unintentional bias affects police work. Similarly, St. Louis Police Chief Sam Dotson said he hopes to introduce wider training for officers about recognizing "implicit bias" and making better decisions about when to shoot.

■ In Philadelphia, Mayor Michael Nutter is urging police in a video message to use force only "if absolutely necessary."

■ The Obama administration issued guidelines this month that restrict the ability of federal law enforcement agencies to profile on the basis of religion, national origin and other certain characteristics. The Justice Department hopes those measures become a model for local departments.

Several police forces were updating their practices even before the Ferguson and New York deaths, with some departments issuing body cameras to officers.

After Philadelphia Police Commissioner Charles Ramsey arrived in 2008, for example, the department began placing police shooting statistics on the Web for the sake of openness and started a pilot program involving body cameras.

US seeks to use bin Laden letters at terror trial

NEW YORK (AP)—Prosecutors want a judge presiding over a terrorism trial to let them show jurors letters recovered in the raid that killed Osama bin Laden to boost evidence against a man snatched off the streets of Libya last year.

In papers in Manhattan federal court, prosecutors asked U.S. District Judge Lewis A. Kaplan to permit the "critically important evidence" against Abu Anas al-Libi.

Al-Libi was nabbed in Tripoli in October 2013 and brought to the United States to face trial in the 1998 bombings of U.S. embassies in Africa that killed 224 people. He has pleaded not guilty in the attacks, which killed a dozen Americans.

The government wants to show jurors six letters dated between June 2010 and April 2011 and recovered from bin Laden's Abbottabad, Pakistan compound, where he was killed May 2, 2011, by a special operations team.

Al-Libi's lawyer did not immediately return a message seeking comment.

Prosecutors said the letters, including two written by al-Libi, prove he actively participated in al-Qaida after eight years incarcerated in Iran. They said the letters would provide a Jan. 12 trial with "powerful, direct, proof of al-Qaida's conspiracies to bomb and kill Americans, as well as Anas al-Libi's knowing and intentional participation in them."

Hawaii lava on course to hit gas station, stores

HONOLULU (AP)—Lava from a volcano on Hawaii's Big Island is on course to reach a shopping center with a gas station and a supermarket in seven to 10 days, officials said Monday.

Lava is about 1 mile from the shopping center in the small town of Pahoa, said Hawaii County Civil Defense Director Darryl Oliveira. The shopping center also contains a hardware store, pharmacy and auto repair shop.

There's still a great deal of uncertainty about when the lava might reach the center and what it could hit. The lava could smother one structure in the complex or cover them all, he said.

"It just depends on what the flow does as it comes through," he told reporters during a conference call.

Oliveira says the county has been in touch with the merchants about evacuation plans. The county hasn't yet advised them to leave.

The supermarket, one of the biggest stores in the center, plans to start removing equipment on Tuesday and shut down on Thursday. Malama Market said in a statement it was encouraging customers to keep shopping until its doors close.

The gas station would sell its remaining fuel and pump out what's leftover if it does have to evacuate, Oliveira said. It would then fill its tanks with water and firefighting foam.

This plan has been approved the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and by the state Department of Health, he said.

An earlier idea called for the gas station to put sand into the tanks, but this wouldn't have removed all flammable vapors. It also would have destroyed the pumping system. By using firefighting foam, the gas station may use the tanks again if lava bypasses the area and it wants to reopen.

AP

In this photo taken Dec. 12, 2014, and provided by the U.S. Geological Survey, the active lava flow front continues to advance downslope towards the northeast about a mile and a half from the marketplace in Pahoa, Hawaii.

Asia

Death toll from Indonesian mudslide rises to 56

BANJARNEGARA, Indonesia (AP)—The death toll from a mudslide that flattened much of a village in central Indonesia rose to 56 on Monday before rain forced rescuers to halt their search for dozens of missing people, officials said.

Seventeen bodies, including those of four children, were recovered Monday, said Sutopo Purwo Nugroho, the spokesman for Indonesia's Disaster Mitigation Agency. Fifty-two people were still missing, three days after Friday's disaster.

More than 3,000 rescuers, including soldiers, police and volunteers, were mobilized to dig through the mud and wreckage after the landslide buried more than 100 houses in Jemblung village in Central Java province's Banjarnegara district.

Many people in the remote farming village heard a deep rumbling sound just after dusk Friday and managed to flee to safer ground, while others were either at home or in the local mosque when mud, rocks and trees tumbled onto their village.

Source: Reuters
Graphic: Staff, Tribune News Service

The search for the missing was halted Monday as rain prompted fears of another mudslide. Local army chief Lt. Col. Edy Rahmatullah said it would resume Tuesday.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo, who visited the area Sunday, pledged to relocate hundreds of people left homeless by the disaster and promised government aid for the injured. Eleven villagers were hospitalized.

Seasonal rains and high tides cause frequent floods in Indonesia. Many of the country's 250 million people live in mountainous areas or fertile, flood-prone plains near rivers.

According to the national Disaster Mitigation Agency, about 41 million Indonesians live in regions prone to landslides.

US Marine charged in Filipino transgender slaying

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine government prosecutors charged a U.S. Marine with murder Monday in the killing of a Filipino, saying the suspect acknowledged attacking the victim after he found out she was a transgender woman.

Prosecutor Emilie de los Santos said there was "probable cause" that Marine Pfc. Joseph Scott Pemberton, who has been detained since shortly after the October incident, killed Jennifer Laude, whose former name was Jeffrey, in the motel room where the victim's body was found in Olongapo city, northwest of Manila. She had apparently been strangled and drowned in a toilet bowl.

"It's murder," de los Santos told reporters after filing the charge against the 19-year-old Pemberton before a regional court. "It was aggravated by treachery, abuse of superior strength and cruelty."

Among the evidence submitted by de los Santos and other prosecutors were statements by Pemberton's three Marine colleagues who went bar-hopping with him on Oct. 11 in Olongapo, a former liberty town when the U.S. Navy was at the vast Subic Naval base, now a bustling commercial Freeport and recreation hub.

Pemberton and some of his colleagues later picked up women at a disco bar and separately checked in at nearby motels, then returned to their ship after midnight. Witnesses saw Pemberton check in with Laude at a motel room, where he was seen leaving shortly before the discovery of the killing, prosecutors said in their statement to the court.

Marine Lance Corporal Jairn Michael Rose, who went out with Pemberton that night, acknowledged that the suspect later confided back at their ship that he attacked the woman he was with by choking her after discovering that she was a transgender when she undressed, according to the prosecutors.

"I think I killed a he/she," Pemberton was quoted as having told Rose.

Pemberton, a skilled boxer, allegedly said he choked her from behind with his arm "for a couple of minutes" until she stopped moving then dragged her into the bathroom, according to the prosecutors.

The new details are likely to spark renewed condemnation by left-wing and transgender groups, which have labeled the attack a hate crime.

The case comes after the Philippines and the United States strengthened ties with the recent signing of a defense accord that allows greater U.S. access to Philippine military camps. The accord will help Washington's bid to reassert its presence in Asia, and enable Manila to deter what it calls China's aggressive moves to reinforce its claims in disputed South China Sea territories.

The case reignited a debate over custody of American military personnel accused of crimes. But the looming irritant between the treaty allies over Pemberton's custody was eased after Washington agreed to move him from a U.S. warship to the Philippine military's main camp in metropolitan Manila, where he remained under American custody with an outer ring of Filipino guards.

The Philippine government said in a statement issued by its foreign affairs department that it looks "forward to the full cooperation of the U.S. government in ensuring that justice is secured for Laude."

Harry Roque, the lawyer of Laude's family, welcomed the prosecutors' ruling and angrily demanded that Pemberton be thrown into an ordinary jail.

AP

In this Wednesday, Oct. 22, 2014 file photo, U.S. Marine Pfc Joseph Scott Pemberton, a suspect in the gruesome killing of a transgender Filipino woman, is escorted to his detention as he arrives inside the compound of the Camp Aguinaldo military headquarters in suburban Quezon city, north of Manila, Philippines.

Abe emerging as a rare strong leader in Japan

Abe

TOKYO (AP)—Most Japanese prime ministers come and go, their names soon forgotten. Yasuhiro Nakasone was an exception in the 1980s as well as Junichiro Koizumi in the early years of this century. Now, Shinzo Abe could be emerging as one of the rare strong ones after a decisive election victory.

It's a surprising turn for a politician who flopped in his first stint as prime minister, succeeding Koizumi in 2006 and lasting just one year before stepping down, citing health reasons.

Since getting a second chance in late 2012, Abe has been one of the more effective prime ministers in recent years. Just surviving two years, longer than any of his five immediate predecessors, is an accomplishment in Japanese politics.

His economic revitalization plan, dubbed "Abenomics," revived growth and boosted stock prices until the economy recently lost steam, and he also pushed through difficult changes in national security policy over a divided public.

With a clear victory in Sunday's elections, which he forced by dissolving the lower house last month, the 60-year-old Abe has reaffirmed his hold on power for up to four more years. Doubts remain about whether he can achieve his broader economic and political goals, which face opposition from both vested interests and the public.

But Abe sounds confident and determined.

"The victory gives us strength to follow through on our political will," he said at a news conference Monday.

The prospect cheers right-wing nationalists, who see Abe as one of their own. It equally causes consternation among liberals, who fear he is moving the nation away from its post-World War II pacifist path. The United States and other foreign partners have welcomed a leader with staying power who has gotten things done, though Abe's nationalist leanings have strained ties with China and South Korea, both victims of Japan's military aggression before and during World War II.

Love him or hate him, Abe is setting himself apart from Japan's tradition of revolving door prime ministers who last a year or so in office. Nakasone held on to power for nearly five years, and Koizumi slightly more. Political fortunes are difficult to predict, but Abe could well be on a similar track.

"It's possible he will be considered a great prime minister like Koizumi," said Yu Uchiyama, a Tokyo University professor and author of a book on the Koizumi administration and how it influenced Japanese politics. "The problem will be defense policy or foreign relations, especially with East Asian countries. If he can manage these issues, he can be a great prime minister."

Abe is benefiting in part from good timing. He led his Liberal Democratic Party—a conservative party despite the name—back to power in 2012 after voters lost confidence in the upstart Democratic Party of Japan, which ruled for three unsteady years, leaving the opposition divided and in disarray.

Voters are fairly evenly divided on Abe's policies, but many felt there was no viable alternative to his party. So victory was virtually assured when he dissolved the lower house. His party alone won 291 of the 475 seats, and its coalition with the Komei party took a two-thirds majority.

Abe's survival suggests that he has inspired a least a measure of confidence among voters, and some like his more assertive stance toward neighbors like China at a time when Japan's clout in the world is receding.

He has also tried to learn from the mistakes of his first administration, when his heavy focus on a nationalist agenda sent his popularity tumbling.

Australia PM lays flowers at memorials for victims

SYDNEY (AP)--Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott laid flowers Tuesday at a makeshift memorial in Sydney for the victims of a central city cafe siege that left three people dead.

Abbott wrote a message and waved to the crowd as he laid a bouquet of white flowers at the memorial in Martin Place, the plaza in central Sydney where the drama took place. His wife, Margie, laid another bouquet of red flowers.

From early Tuesday, a steady stream of tearful people placed bouquets at the memorial outside of the Lindt Chocolat Cafe, where the gunman took 17 hostages a day earlier. The siege ended 16 hours later in a barrage of gunfire that left two hostages and the Iranian-born gunman dead, and a nation that has long prided itself on its peace rocked to its core.

As the standoff that started around 9:45 a.m. stretched through the day into nightfall with no apparent solution in sight, police stormed the cafe around 2 a.m. Tuesday when they heard gunfire inside, said New South Wales state police Commissioner Andrew Scipione.

"They made the call because they believed that at that time, if they didn't enter, there would have been many more lives lost," Scipione said.

A loud bang rang out, several hostages ran from the building and police swooped in amid heavy gunfire, shouts and flashes. A police bomb disposal robot also was sent into the building, but no explosives were found.

The gunman was identified as 50-year-old Man Haron Monis, whom Abbott said earlier had "a long history of violent crime, infatuation with extremism and mental instability."

Australian Muslim groups condemned the hostage-taking in a joint statement and said the inscription of the Islamic flag was a "testimony of faith that has been misappropriated by misguided individuals."

Many Australians offered on Twitter to accompany people dressed in Muslim clothes who were afraid of a backlash against the country's tiny Muslim minority of some 500,000 people in a nation of 24 million. The hashtag (hash)IllRideWithYou was used more than 90,000 times by early Tuesday.

World

Tens of thousands dead in South Sudan conflict: UN

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP)—Tens of thousands of people have died in South Sudan during one year of warfare and the country's leaders are putting their "personal ambitions" ahead of the young nation's future, the U.N. secretary-general said Monday.

A year ago Monday fighting broke out in South Sudan's capital, Juba, and spiraled across the country. The U.N. says more than 1.9 million people have been displaced by the warfare, battles that often pit fighters loyal to President Salva Kiir, an ethnic Dinka, against those who support former Vice President Riek Machar, an ethnic Nuer.

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called on South Sudan's leaders to agree to an inclusive power-sharing arrangement that would address the root causes of the conflict and ensure accountability for any crimes committed on the battlefield.

There is no official death toll for the conflict, but Ban said "tens of thousands" of South Sudanese have died. The fighting has been marked by vicious atrocities, largely ethnic in nature.

The two sides have signed several peace deals brokered by neighboring governments, but none has succeeded in stopping the fighting in the oil-rich country.

AP

In this file photo of Sunday Dec. 29, 2013 file photo, displaced people gather around a water truck to fill containers at a United Nations compound which has become home to thousands of people displaced by the recent fighting, in the capital Juba, South Sudan.

The U.N. Security Council blamed South Sudan's "man-made political, security and humanitarian catastrophe" and the threat of famine on its feuding leaders. In a presidential statement issued Monday, it again threatened targeted sanctions against those impeding the peace process.

South Sudan's civilians face a "dreadful" situation and have been victims of targeted killings and looting, said the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein.

"The people of South Sudan are living in a tinderbox, with emotions high, an abundant flow of weapons and with both sides recruiting fighters, often forcefully and including children," Al Hussein said.

Government troops and armed youths have been battling in Upper Nile state in recent days, a sign that widespread violence could return now that the six-month rainy season has ended.

Qatar: Small country the big new player in sport

DOHA, Qatar (AP)--Leaders of Qatar seem to have a simple formula for their plans over the next decade: money + sports (equals) global fame.

Never in sporting history has a country invested so massively, quickly, broadly, internationally and ostentatiously as the small oil-and-gas rich Gulf emirate that is using the world's thirst for energy and for sporting entertainment to realize its giant "look at me!" ambitions.

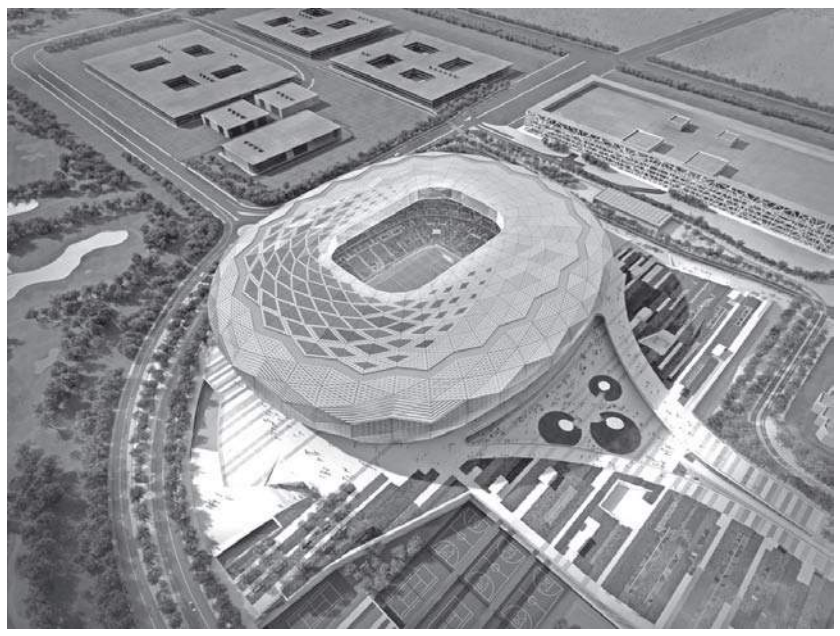
With a spending spree of staggering reach and proportions, the thumb of desert with a native population of just 282,750 - that would be 14th in a list of London boroughs and tied with Toledo, Ohio, for 66th among U.S. cities - has used sports to make itself a household name in Europe. The rest of the world is next.

Lionel Messi and his teammates wear "QATAR AIRWAYS" on the front of their Barcelona shirts for $40 million a year, which Qatar was earning in just three hours from hydrocarbon exports before the recent plunge in oil prices.

Hundreds of millions more bought Paris Saint-Germain, France's most glamorous football team, and made it champion again.

Further vast spending has greased Qatar's passage in sport's corridors of power, made it the new favored venue for major events, acquired another team in Belgium, enabled Qatar's sports broadcaster to muscle aside international competitors, sponsored Europe's richest horse race, and built a world-class sports hospital and a state-of-the art training academy in Doha that makes hardened sports pros giddy with awe.

And that's just the start. The projected cost of readying Qatar to host football's World Cup in 2022: an otherworldly $160 billion dollars.



AP

This is file image released on Tuesday Dec. 2, 2014 by Qatar's Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy of an artist's impression of the Qatar Foundation Stadium.

Small wonder that when Qatar's sports minister walks into a room, some see a walking cash machine.

Speaking to The Associated Press in a rare and exclusive interview, Salah bin Ghanem bin Nasser al-Ali recalled that as a student in the United States, people used to ask him: "Where is Qatar?"

Now they ask: How about investing in our sport, our team?

"Most of the meetings with officials are like this," he said. "We in Qatar, we look for good opportunities. I meet a lot of them and they do presentations from buying clubs, to new clubs, to all kinds of sports, and introducing new sports in Qatar. And a lot of opportunities. We are open. We listen."

Qatar's grab on sport isn't only for prestige, recognition, vanity and to drill new wells of revenue for when oil and gas run dry. It also sees sport as a way of motivating Qataris who, thanks to the riches underground, are the world's second-wealthiest people per capita but, in obesity and diabetes, have the health problems of comfortable living.

"You want to create a challenge for them," al-Ali said. "Some countries they create, really, political challenges - you know? - to make a focus for the people (or they) create another enemy."

At the turn of the 20th century, this former British protectorate smaller than Puerto Rico first tasted prosperity when it became the hub of the pearl industry. Then Japan farmed pearls, took over the global market and the bottom fell out for Qatar.

Today, that collapse is still cited as an example of why Qatar must think long-term, prepare for a post-hydrocarbon future and build an economy based instead on a well-educated population and revenues from its growing portfolio of global investments - Barclays Bank, London's iconic Harrods department store, its stock exchange, and 2012 Olympic Village, to name just some.

"You always think, `OK, what can I do to survive in difficult circumstances?' I think one of them is to have a good relationship with big countries," al-Ali said. "You need to be known, you need to be heard."

So sports fans find themselves tuning into beIN Sports - an offshoot of Qatar's Al Jazeera network - that is gobbling up broadcasting rights not only in the Middle East but also the Americas, Australasia and France. That operation is one the most visible vehicles of Qatar, whose acquisition-hungry sovereign wealth funds are estimated to be worth more than $100 billion.

At Paris Saint-Germain, fans now celebrate again after Qatar's 2011 takeover and star recruits - David Beckham finished his career there - ended the club's 19-year title drought in Ligue 1.

When the Middle East's first World Cup kicks off in 2022, Qatar will already have hosted world championships in track, swimming, handball, volleyball and possibly also basketball, since it is bidding to stage that sport's World Cup in 2019 or 2023. In the process, Qatar will also have trained sports-management administrators and workers who could challenge Western firms in the big business of organizing and marketing sports.

"Any event that we deliver now in the Middle East is entirely delivered by organizations or by firms coming from either the West or North America and South America," said Mushtaq al-Waeli, executive director of a Qatari institute, Josoor, that is training people from the Middle East and North Africa ahead of the World Cup.

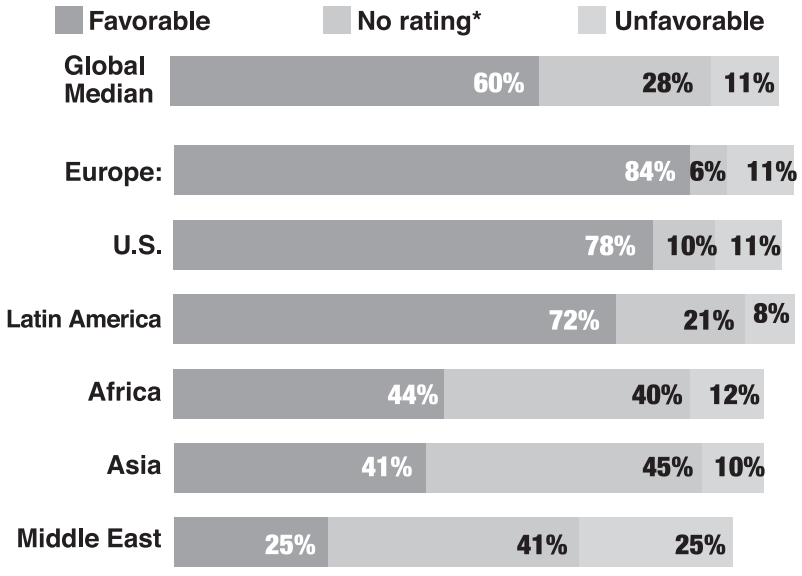
"They take the experience and they go back and do it somewhere else," he said in an AP interview. "So there is no legacy really left in our region."

Still, Qatar hungers for more.

Failed bids for the 2016 and 2020 Olympics could serve as dry-runs for another try. And there are plenty more sports, teams and events for Qatar to buy into. The sports minister said he personally would like to own an English Premier League club one day.

Positive world view on Pope Francis

A global poll was conducted asking people what their views were of Pope Francis.

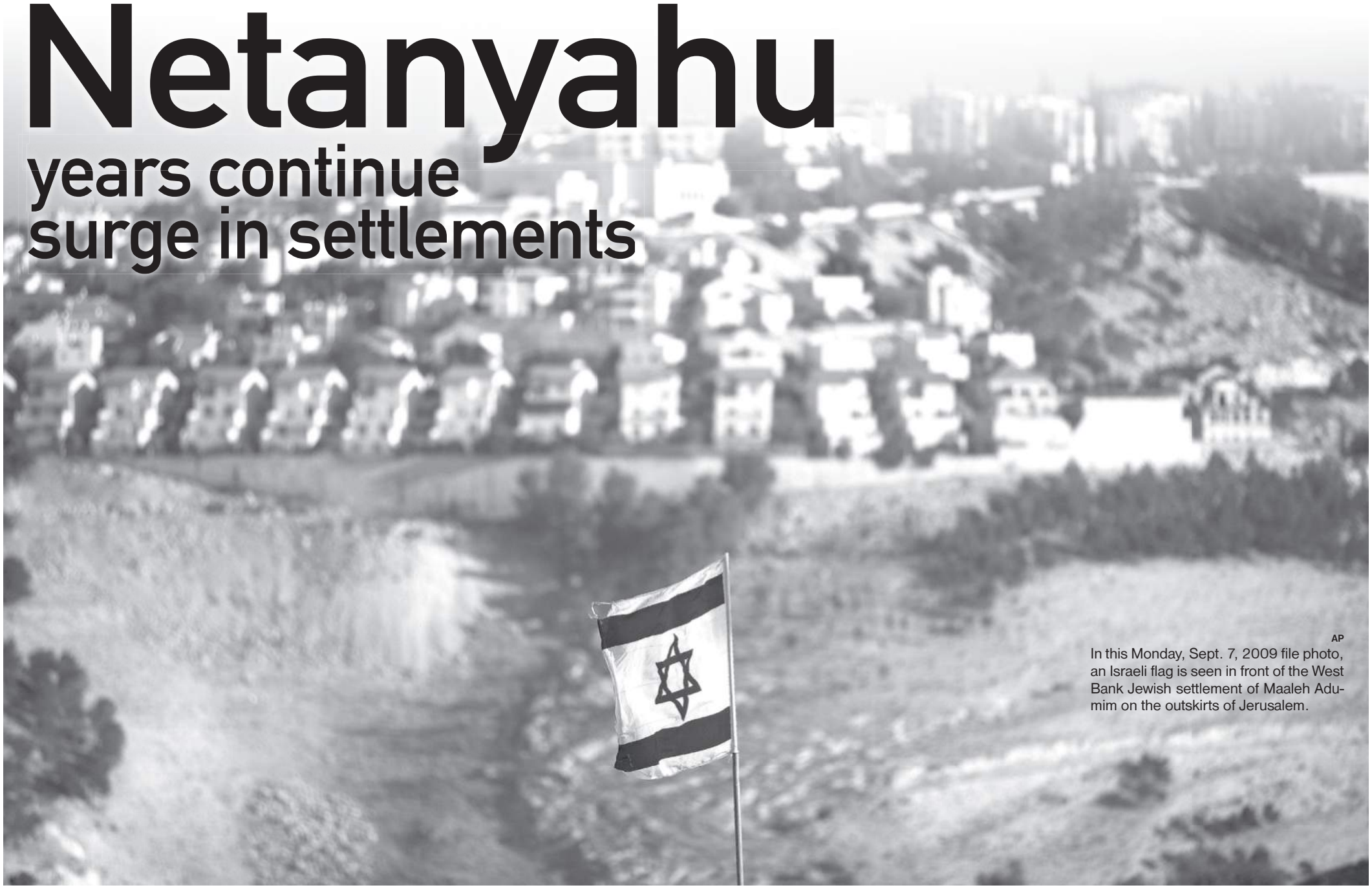


*Includes "Never heard of," "Can't rate" and "Don't Know" responses
**Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding

Source: Pew Research
Graphic: Tribune News Service

Focus

Netanyahu years continue surge in settlements



AP
In this Monday, Sept. 7, 2009 file photo, an Israeli flag is seen in front of the West Bank Jewish settlement of Maaleh Adumim on the outskirts of Jerusalem.

JERUSALEM (AP)—The population of Jewish settlers in the occupied West Bank has continued to surge during Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's years in office, growing at more than twice the pace of Israel's overall population, according to newly obtained official figures.

Settlement growth also was strong beyond Israel's separation barrier, seen by many as the basis for a border between Israel and a future Palestinian state.

The figures reflect Netanyahu's continued support for settlement construction, even while repeatedly stating his commitment to the eventual establishment of an independent Palestinian state as part of a future peace agreement. They also could be a topic of discussion as U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry meets with Netanyahu and European officials this week over a promised U.N. Security Council proposal dealing with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

While Israeli leaders and prime ministers of all political affiliations have allowed and sometimes encouraged settlements, the U.S. and Western allies have dwindling patience for their construction.

From the beginning of 2009 until the beginning of 2014—Netanyahu returned to office in March 2009—the Jewish settler population in the West Bank grew 23 percent, to 355,993 people. In comparison, the overall population has grown 9.6 percent to just over 8 million in that time. Figures for 2014 are not expected before late next year.

The rate of settler population growth slowed slightly under Netanyahu, from 31 percent during the previous five years under his predecessors Ariel Sharon and Ehud Olmert. Olmert especially took relatively little heat for the settlements because he was seen as a moderate who was actively engaged in efforts to withdraw from occupied territory.

In all, the settler population has more than doubled in the 21 years since Israel and the Palestinians have been engaged in an on-and-off peace process aimed at a partition of the Holy Land.

Israel captured the West Bank in the 1967 Mideast war. The Palestinians claim the West Bank, east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip for their future state. They say all Israeli construction in the West Bank and east Jerusalem is illegal—a position with wide international support. Israel withdrew all its troops and settlers from Gaza in 2005.

In a situation that challenges Israel's claims to being a democracy, the more than 2 million Palestinians in the West Bank cannot vote for the Israeli government that controls much of their lives, while Jewish settlers can.

Netanyahu repeatedly has drawn U.S. ire with controversial construction plans. Defense Minister Moshe Yaalon suggested last week that the government would have liked to do more if not for the U.S. pressure.

"We are very, very careful not to push the envelope too much," Yaalon said. "This (U.S.) administration won't be around forever and I hope it is temporary." Even so, he boasted that settlements are growing faster than "any other part of the country."

The figures, which come from Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics, confirm Yaalon's claims. Netanyahu's office declined to comment on the figures ahead of a possible U.N. Security Council vote this week a resolution setting a November 2016 deadline for ending Israeli occupation. Another proposal, by France, would set a time limit of two years for Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

Shortly after taking office, Netanyahu gave a landmark speech endorsing Palestinian statehood, reversing his previous opposition. But his government has refused to stop settlement construction, with the exception of a 10-month period in 2009 and 2010 that was meant to spur peace talks. U.S.-brokered negotiations since have collapsed.

Netanyahu never has said where he envisions a final border, but he has indicated that Israel must at the minimum retain the settlement "blocs," a term that usually refers to communities inside the separation barrier.

The barrier stretches beyond the internationally-recognized pre-1967 Israeli borders, encompassing nearly a tenth of the West Bank. Israelis see that as a practical effort to incorporate most Jewish settlers, mitigating the difficult task of removing settlers as part of a peace partition. The Palestinians have suggested they would accept such an idea if they were compensated for the territory with land swaps.

Construction beyond the barrier complicates any future pullout. Past experience in removing settlers—from Egypt's Sinai desert in the early 1980s and from Gaza in 2005—suggests many would try to resist. The number of settlers living beyond the barrier line, according to the new numbers, is about 10 times greater than the settler population of Gaza—nearly 82,000 settlers at the beginning of 2014, compared to about 68,000 five years before.

If the settlements beyond the barrier make partition impossible, Israel could one day face a scenario in which Palestinians demand equal rights within a single state, which would force it to choose between being a Jewish state and a democracy.

The settlement growth is roughly the same on both sides of the separation barrier, with the anti-settlement watchdog group Peace Now identifying growth rates of 23 percent inside the barrier and 20 percent beyond it.

"We are seeing construction growth throughout the entire West Bank," said Lior Amihai, a Peace Now researcher. "This indicates government policy."

He said that even when factoring in the higher birthrate of the settler population, which tends to be more religious, the settlement growth rate is higher because of the nonstop construction.

The ultra-Orthodox settlement of Beitar Illit, for example, grew 29 percent during the five-year period. The population of Bnei Brak, an ultra-Orthodox city inside Israel, grew 14 percent.

Dani Dayan, a leader of the settlement group Yesha, said the growth rate has been largely consistent under all prime ministers over the past decade. He cited a number of reasons, including the higher birthrate, cheaper housing, quality of life and ideological draw. "This includes great schools, homey close-knit community spirit, open spaces and clean air, cost of living and a sense of mission and purpose," he said.

The statistics do not include the roughly 200,000 Israelis living in east Jerusalem. Israel has annexed the area and granted Palestinians there residency rights. The Israeli annexation, however, is not internationally recognized, and a ring of Jewish neighborhoods it has built in the city's eastern sector are considered settlements by the Palestinians and most of the world.

Another complication is the settlement of Ariel, which has grown into a town of over 18,000 people. Even though it is in the middle of the northern West Bank, many Israelis consider it to be part of the blocs, something Palestinians reject. Including Ariel, more than 100,000 settlers would potentially have to be evacuated.

Netanyahu "is a prime minister for settlements," senior Palestinian official Saeb Erekat said. "His aim was to destroy the two-state solution. He wants the concept of one state, two systems—apartheid."

Good Housekeeping

'Dog' of a bungalow transformed into FRENCH-TEXAS FEEL

By MARIANA GREENE
The Dallas Morning News

DALLAS MORNING NEWS/MCT

The living room at Mike Munsterman's house in the Oak Cliff neighborhood of Dallas on October 9, 2014. "It was a dog of a house," Munsterman said of his recently remodeled domain.

DALLAS--"It was a dog of a house," says Mike Munsterman of his recently remodeled domain. Looking at the bungalow's impeccable double front doors, gleaming in freshly painted black, and the landscape's garden rooms, with fountains babbling and gravel smoothed, it is easy to believe a transformation has taken place here.

Inside, the makeover is more startling. "About the only thing we kept is the fireplace surround," Munsterman says of the original 1950 house in Dallas' Old Oak Cliff neighborhood. Munsterman and his partner, Kent Frederick, recently opened their property for a local home tour.

Munsterman, a garden designer and landscape contractor-installer, is no stranger to bringing old houses up to his standards. He updated his previous residence, just two doors away, and recast the grounds there, too.

Munsterman, 55, spent three months working out floor plans and getting bids, then endured about eight months of construction. The driveway and front sidewalk were removed, to be replaced with a developing screen of needlepoint holly and a sunken garden that the neighbors call the happy hour courtyard.

"I don't like a straight-on sidewalk," he says. "The mailman hates it."

He lightened and heightened the boxy living room with vaulted ceilings. Faux beams are rough cedar over wood to give the look of a heavy beam without the weight. The ceiling treatment and beams reappear in the airy master bedroom.

Starting out, Munsterman studied the well-known work of Louisiana architect A. Hayes Town (1903-2005), whose residential designs were heavily influenced by the Spanish, French and Creole history of Louisiana. He also admires the unique style of the late Dallas architectural designer Charles Dilbeck, many of whose Oak Cliff houses still stand.

"Kent is from Louisiana, so we were going for a French-Texas kind of feeling," he says. The three-tiered iron fountain in front, brick courtyards, veranda, jalousies, French doors, screened sleeping porch, floor-to-ceiling shutters and books with Louisiana on the spine prove their intent.

Although both homeowners had furniture they liked in their previous, separate houses, "we just decided to do a different direction, and it's worked," Munsterman says. Walls and upholstery in neutral colors, bedding in calming grays, waxed floors and flat, woven rugs impart comfort, informality and tranquility.

Color comes in the form of artwork hung gallery style in the living room and hall. Figural drawings, primitive likenesses and humans in abstract, vividly colored, are showcased in the otherwise quiet living room.

The hall is animated with random floor-to-ceiling portraits bought on eBay and at antique shops and yard sales in Dallas and in Black Mountain, N.C., where the two own a second home. Friends also contributed once they saw a collection forming.

"We've paid $5, $25. We name them: Opie, Liz Taylor, June Cleaver. This is Scary Reggie, a self-portrait" of a sad-looking man with mussed hair and a greenish complexion.

The original front-facing garage was incorporated into a large kitchen with a long, plain table that seats 10. Munsterman is a repeat user of Carrara marble for kitchen and bath, and here he has employed it for vast countertops, subway tile, hexagonal floor tiles and backsplashes.

"I like white marble because it is classic and not a color commitment," he says.

After three years of intermittent construction, the junked cars, plastic lattices, front-facing garage, rampant bamboo and thicket of volunteer hackberries are gone. In their place are the graceful elements of Southern architecture, morning glories cloaking the chicken coop and the peaceful sound of water dripping and splashing.

Take steps to ensure that you get the best carpet installation

By ANGIE HICKS
ANGIE'S LIST

Is new carpet in your future? Don't forget to walk through installation details before you buy.

It's important to assess carpet quality and match type to intended use, but you'll avoid hassles if you also know what to expect with installation and related fees.

■ Hire an experienced, reputable carpet installer

Start with choosing carpet from a retailer with good reviews from friends, family or a trusted online site. If the dealer doesn't offer installation, ask for a recommendation or follow the same steps you'd take to source carpet.

Work with a provider who'll visit your home to ensure proper measurements and to plan transitions between rooms, as well as seam placement.

Because carpet rolls are limited in width, a room will often require a seam. The World Floor Covering Association recommends working with your provider to create a diagram that plots out seams and transitions before carpet is cut. Seams can be minimized if placed under furniture or if they run in the direction of the light.

■ Ask about carpet installation details

Be sure you know about warranties on the carpet and the installation.

A reputable installer should follow instructions from the carpet manufacturer and adhere to standards set by such organizations as The Carpet and Rug Institute. The CRI recommends that carpets be power-stretched to minimize wrinkling. One top-rated service provider told us some installers use a smaller stretcher--often called a "knee kicker"--that is more appropriate for small repair jobs.

■ Ask about all carpet installation fees

Don't let carpet companies hide fees under the rug. Some advertise free or low-cost installation or padding, but tack on other charges. Before you hire, be clear about what services and fees will be part of your job. For example, you may have to pay for the installer to move and replace furniture and to remove and discard old carpeting and padding.

Baseboards and moldings will have to be removed. Will you want to keep or replace them? Reinstallation may cost extra, and could require patching and paint touchup.

If you believe interior doors may not clear the carpet, ask about your company's door policy. You may need to hire a carpenter.

Top installers say excess carpet should total no more than 10 percent of a room's width and length. For a small fee, you could have larger leftover pieces bound as small rugs.

■ Plan before the carpet installers arrive

Ideally, install carpet after wallpapering, painting or other remodeling work.

To reduce dust and dirt, vacuum existing carpet before removal. Ask if the installers will vacuum the exposed sub-floor or if you'll need to do that.

During installation, provide adequate ventilation by opening windows and doors, running an exhaust fan or operating your HVAC system fan.

■ After carpet installation

Before the installer leaves, walk through the carpeted area and confirm that everything meets your expectations.

It may take 72 hours for odors and volatile organic compounds from the carpet or adhesives to dissipate.

Also, it's normal for new carpet to shed; vacuum loose fibers. Use scissors to trim any "sprouting" loops or tufts. If you see wrinkles or ripples, contact your retailer or installer immediately; they may need to re-stretch your carpet.

Angie Hicks is the founder of Angie's List, a resource for local consumer reviews on everything from home repair to health care. Follow her on Twitter @Angie_Hicks.

THIS IS A HAMMER

Leaky window sash is a simple fix

By SAMANTHA MAZZOTTA
KING FEATURES SYND., INC.

Q: One of the windows in our bedroom is leaking air underneath the bottom sash. On cold days I can feel air flowing between the sash and the windowsill, and condensation often forms along the bottom of the windowpane. In the summer, this is the window that we put our air-conditioning unit in. I checked underneath the sash to see if there is any damage, but did not see any. How can I stop the leak? -- Drafty in Durham, N.H.

A: The window frame may not be damaged, but some slight warping may have occurred over time as the window braced the air-conditioning unit. If there is no visible damage, you should be able to quickly block the leak using weather stripping.

As far as the condensation: If the condensation is on the outside or inside of the window -- and not forming between double panes -- it probably is a normal occurrence during winter. (If it forms between double panes, it may be time to replace that pane or bottom sash.) However, its location can help you pinpoint where a gap exists between the sash and the sill.

In this case, the condensation is forming along the bottom of the window. On really cold days it may even drip down and puddle along the sill. It signals that warm and cold air are meeting much more frequently along that sash than other parts of the window.

As I mentioned, weather stripping should resolve this problem quickly. Your main concern is what type of weather stripping to use. This Old House has a nice, quick guide to the different types of weather stripping here: www.thisoldhouse.com/toh/photos/0,,20441335,00.html.

Because you need a fix in a hurry, consider either felt stripping or foam tape. You probably will need to replace the felt stripping each year, but it's fairly inexpensive, and easy to install with finishing nails or a staple gun. Foam tape comes in several widths and can be rapidly installed by peeling off the backing and sticking into place along the bottom of the sash.

A pricier, but longer-lasting option is a vinyl-tube type of weather stripping. It's durable and can be purchased in different widths, and typically has the option of either a peel-and-stick backing or screw-in fasteners.

Before installing weather stripping, clean the contact surfaces of the window thoroughly with soap and water and make sure they are completely dry. Measure the width of the bottom sash and cut the stripping with an extra inch on each side. When you install the stripping, use a utility knife to trim away excess at each edge.

HOME TIP: If the windows in your home or a room fog up regularly in winter, try increasing air circulation to reduce humidity: open curtains and crack windows for a few minutes daily, or run a dehumidifier.

Send your questions or home tips to ask@thisisahammer.com.

Life & Style

Camille Cosby defends husband as 'kind, generous'

NEW YORK (AP)--Bill Cosby's wife rejected sex assault allegations against her husband of a half-century on Monday, saying the man being accused by at least 15 women of drugging and having sex with them is "a man I do not know."

In a statement issued Monday, Camille Cosby dismissed accusations that date back as far as the late 1960s.

She suggested that her husband, not the women, is the party being harmed.

"None of us will ever want to be in the position of attacking a victim," she said. "But the question should be asked--who is the victim?"

Cosby is being sued for defamation by one alleged victim and for sexual battery by another woman who says he forced her to perform a sex act when she was 15. He has never been charged in connection with any of the accusations, and his lawyers deny many of the allegations. He settled with a Pennsylvania woman who in a 2005 lawsuit said Cosby drugged and molested her in 2004.

A new round of claims of sexual assault and rape began in early November--accusations Camille Cosby said haven't been properly vetted by the media. She likened the media's handling of the accusations to a Rolling Stone article about a gang rape at the University of Virginia that later proved to be untrue, saying her husband's accusers have been "given a pass" by the media.

AP

In this Nov. 6, 2014 file photo, entertainer Bill Cosby and his wife Camille laugh as they tell a story about collecting one of the pieces in the upcoming exhibit, "Conversations: African and African-American Artworks in Dialogue," at the Smithsonian's National Museum of African Art in Washington.

"The (Rolling Stone) story was heart-breaking, but ultimately appears to be proved to be untrue. Many in the media were quick to link that story to stories about my husband--until that story unwound," she said.

Noting that she married Cosby in 1964, a year after they met, she said, "The man I met, and fell in love with, and whom I continue to love, is the man you all knew through his work. He is a kind man, a generous man, a funny man, and a wonderful husband, father and friend. He is the man you thought you knew."

The statement, released by Cosby spokesman David Brokaw, is the first public comment from Camille Cosby since the renewed allegations began.

Since then, the 77-year-old comedian's tour has been whittled by cancellations and indefinite postponements of about 10 concerts in as many states reaching into next spring. A comedy special was canceled by Netflix, and NBC scuttled his prospective new sitcom that had been in the works.

Earlier Monday, Spelman College in Atlanta, a historically black institution, announced it was suspending its endowed professorship with Cosby.

Camille Cosby's defense of her husband came after this weekend's publication of a brief interview with Cosby in The New York Post, where he maintained his silence regarding the allegations while praising his wife for "love and the strength of womanhood" for weathering the public scrutiny raging against him.

While many of the allegations against Cosby are blocked from court by statutes of limitations, a Southern California woman has sued the comedian claiming he molested her in a bedroom of the Playboy Mansion around 1974 when she was 15 years old.

A lawyer for the woman, Judy Huth, wrote in a court filing Friday that he has interviewed two witnesses who corroborate her story. Attorney Marc Strecker also states he has photographs of Huth and Cosby that were shot at the Playboy Mansion when she was underage.

Cosby's attorneys are seeking to dismiss Huth's lawsuit, stating her efforts to sell her story to a tabloid 10 years ago undercut her claim that she only recently discovered the psychological damage she contends Cosby caused.

SIDEBAR

Lawyer: Witnesses back Bill Cosby sex abuse suit

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A lawyer for a woman who says Bill Cosby sexually abused her when she was 15 stated in a recent court filing that he has interviewed two witnesses who corroborate her story.

Attorney Marc Strecker wrote in a sworn declaration filed in Los Angeles Superior Court on Friday that he has reviewed photographs of his client, Judy Huth, with Cosby at the Playboy Mansion in the mid-1970s, the place and time she says the abuse happened.

Huth's sexual battery lawsuit against Cosby comes amid a flurry of allegations that he drugged and sexually assaulted more than a dozen women. He has never been charged in connection with any of the accusations, and his lawyers deny many of the allegations. He settled with a Pennsylvania woman who in a 2005 lawsuit said Cosby drugged and molested her in 2004.

Huth

Cosby's attorney Martin Singer is seeking to dismiss Huth's suit and has called it an extortion attempt. He says Huth tried to sell her story to a tabloid 10 years ago and contends that undercuts her claim of recently discovered psychological damage. Singer did not return a phone message from The Associated Press seeking comment Monday.

The AP doesn't normally identify people who say they are victims of sexual abuse, but Huth has come forward publicly in the lawsuit and at a news conference.

Strecker's declaration does not provide details about how the witnesses corroborate Huth's story, but her lawsuit states she and a 16-year-old female friend were taken to the Playboy Mansion by Cosby sometime around 1974. The lawsuit states that they met him at a film shoot, and he later gave them alcohol while they played pool, before he took them to the mansion.

Strecker's filing also includes a declaration from Dr. Anthony E. Reading, a clinical psychologist who interviewed Huth and stated there is "a reasonable basis to believe that Ms. Huth has been subject to childhood sexual abuse." Reading's statement does not mention Cosby. Strecker didn't return a call from AP.

Many of the allegations against Cosby are blocked from court by statutes of limitations, but Los Angeles police are investigating Huth's claims.

Atari's 'E.T.' game joins Smithsonian collection

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP)—One of the "E.T." Atari game cartridges unearthed this year from a heap of garbage buried deep in the New Mexico desert has been added to the video game history collection at the Smithsonian.

Museum specialist Drew Robarge made the announcement Monday in a blog post. He included a photograph of the crinkled cartridge along with the official serial number assigned to the game by the city of Alamogordo, New Mexico.

The game was one of hundreds recovered at the city's landfill last spring as a team of documentary filmmakers investigated a decades-old urban legend that centered on Atari secretly dumping the cartridges. The "E.T." game had the reputation of being the worst game ever, and it contributed to the demise of the company.

Robarge said the Smithsonian has some amazing artifacts that represent big moments in video game history, including Ralph Baer's "Brown Box" prototype for the first video game console and a Pong arcade cabinet. However, missing was something that represented what he called "the darkest days" of the early 1980s when the U.S. video game industry crashed.

He describes the "E.T." cartridge as a defining artifact, saying it tells a story about the challenges of adapting blockbuster movies to video games and the end of an era in video game manufacturing.

"All of these possible interpretations make for a rich and complicated object," he said. "As they say, one man's trash is another man's treasure."

Members of the film crew that sparked the dig at the Alamogordo landfill said they were excited to get the call from the museum.

"Just saying the name Smithsonian resonates throughout the world, and to be part this dig and an iconic museum like the Smithsonian with something that we created and researched and actually had come to fruition is pretty amazing," said Gerhard Runken of Fuel Entertainment.

The documentary debuted on Xbox last month, but it's too soon to say when the "E.T." cartridge might go on display or be worked into an exhibit at the Smithsonian. The museum also has hard hats and a vest from the historic dig.

AP

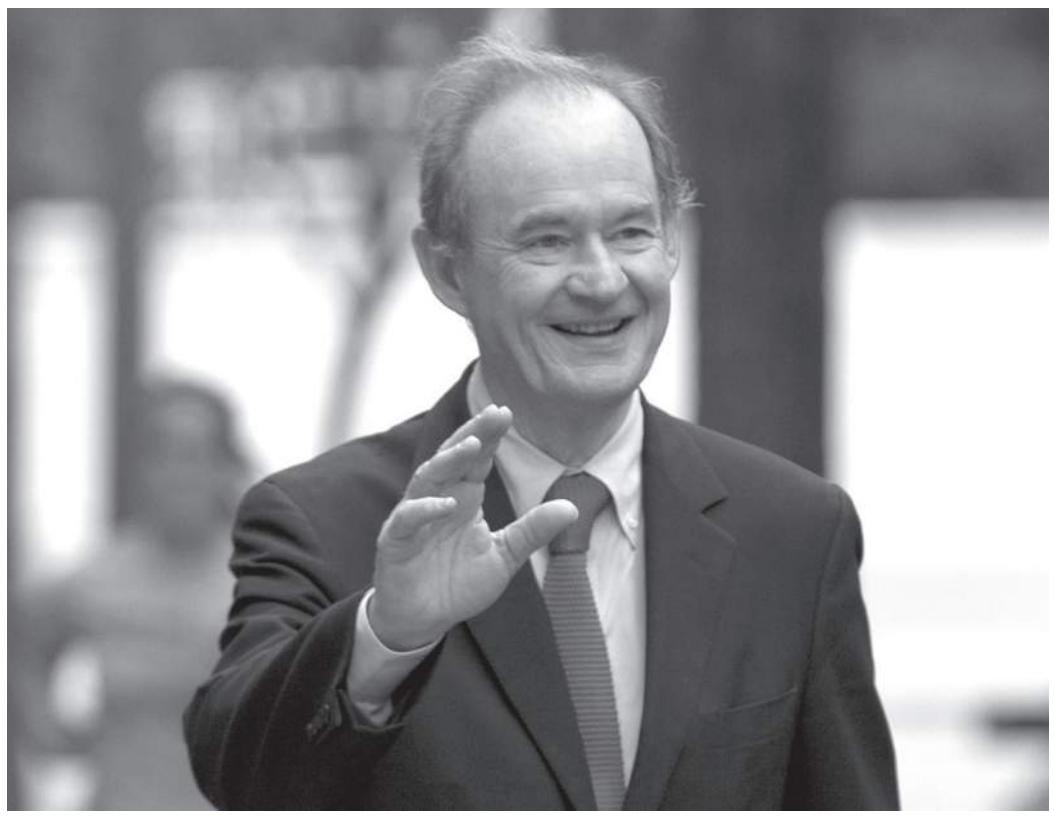
This undated photo provided by the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History shows one of the decades-old Atari 'E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial' game that was found in a dumpsite in Alamogordo, N.M.

Sony threatens to sue for publishing stolen emails

WASHINGTON (AP)—A lawyer representing Sony Pictures Entertainment is warning news organizations not to publish details of company files leaked by hackers in one of the largest digital breaches ever against an American company.

The Sony materials include studio financial records, employment files and what already has been revealed as salacious gossip by Hollywood executives about President Barack Obama and some of the industry's big stars and upcoming films.

Attorney David Boies, a prominent lawyer hired by the company, demanded Sunday that Sony's "stolen information"—publicly available on the Internet by the gigabytes—should be returned or destroyed immediately because it contains privileged, private information. Boies said the studio could sue for damages or financial losses related to Sony's intellectual property or trade secrets.



AP

In this Oct. 10, 2014 file photo, attorney David Boies is seen in Washington.

Sony "does not consent to your possession, review, copying, dissemination, publication, uploading, downloading or making any use of the stolen information, and to request your cooperation in destroying the stolen information," according to one letter sent to the Hollywood Reporter newspaper and obtained by the website Gawker, which also received a letter.

Boies hinted at legal action if organizations "used or disseminated" the material "in any manner." The New York Times also received a letter, the newspaper reported Sunday.

Times Executive Editor Dean Baquet said on the newspaper's website Monday that it was a "disservice" to pretend the Sony documents weren't revealing and public. But he nonetheless said their newsworthiness didn't rise to the level of the Pentagon Papers or WikiLeaks affairs. Both resulted in disclosures of classified documents about U.S. government activity.

Boies did not immediately return emails requesting comment Monday.

Other highly sensitive material from the Sony hacking is being leaked almost daily, including exchanges between Oscar-winning producer Scott Rudin and Sony co-chairman Amy Pascal that contained a frank assessment of Angelina Jolie's talent and racially offensive jokes about Obama's presumed taste in movies.

The leaks also included an early version of the screenplay for the new James Bond movie "SPECTRE." The producers at Britain's EON productions said Saturday they are concerned that third parties who received the screenplay might seek to publish it, and they warned the material is subject to copyright protection around the world.

'Birdman,' 'Budapest' top Critics' Choice noms

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"Birdman," "Boyhood" and a host of now regulars on the awards circuit were among the top films listed in the 20th Critics' Choice Movie Awards nominations Monday, but it was Wes Anderson's darkly whimsical "The Grand Budapest Hotel" that surprised with 11 nominations.

In addition to nods for the film, the direction, the script and the cinematography, star Ralph Fiennes was also recognized in two acting categories: best actor and best actor in a comedy.

Though beloved by critics and a box office success, "The Grand Budapest Hotel" was seen as a dark horse in the awards race due in part to its March release date. But after earning four Golden Globe nominations last week, the quirky film could be rising in awards stature as Hollywood awaits the start of Oscar nominations voting.

"Birdman" scored the most nominations, though, with 13 in categories such as best picture and best director. Lead Michael Keaton and his co-stars Emma Stone and Edward Norton all scored acting nods as well. The dark showbiz comedy also recently earned the most nominations for the Screen Actors Guild Awards and the Golden Globe Awards.

Richard Linklater's 12-year film "Boyhood" got eight nominations, including best picture, director, best supporting actor and actress for Ethan Hawke and Patricia Arquette, and best ensemble.

The Broadcast Film Critics Association also recognized "Gone Girl," "The Imitation Game," "Selma," "The Theory of Everything," "Nightcrawler," "Unbroken" and "Whiplash" with multiple nominations, including best picture.

AP

This image released by Fox Searchlight shows Ralph Fiennes, left, and Tony Revolori in "The Grand Budapest Hotel ."

For the most part, the major acting nominees matched that of the recent awards nominations including Benedict Cumberbatch ("The Imitation Game"), Eddie Redmayne ("The Theory of Everything"), Reese Witherspoon ("Wild") and Julianne Moore ("Still Alice").

Notably, Angelina Jolie, whose "Unbroken" was shut out of Globes nominations, picked up a best directing nod here in addition to Ava DuVernay ("Selma") and David Fincher ("Gone Girl").

The Critics' Choice Awards have a solid track record of matching the eventual best picture Oscar winner. They also honor achievements in genre films including action, comedy and sci-fi/horror, and include categories such as best young actor and actress, allowing for movies such as "Edge of Tomorrow," "22 Jump Street" and "The Babadook" to sneak into the mix.

Awards will be presented live from Hollywood on Jan. 15. Jessica Chastain, Kevin Costner and Ron Howard will all receive special awards during the ceremony, hosted by "Live with Kelly and Michael's" Michael Strahan.

Wartime, Hollywood photographer Phil Stern dies

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Phil Stern, an award-winning photographer who lugged his camera into combat during World War II and later became known for candid shots of Hollywood stars like Marlon Brando, has died. He was 95.

Stern died Saturday in Los Angeles after being hospitalized, said David Fahey, co-owner of the Fahey/Klein Gallery that displayed the photographer's work for decades. Stern, a longtime smoker, had emphysema, according to the Los Angeles Times (http://lat.ms/16orff9).

Stern, who shot for Life, Look and other magazines, honed his skills as a war photographer during the 1943 Allied invasion of Sicily.

"His pictures of the invasion and its aftermath remain among the most outstanding documents in the annals of combat photography in any war, before or since," author and journalist Herbert Mitgang wrote in "Phil Stern: A Life's Work," a 2003 collection of Stern photos.

After the war, Stern gained fame for photos of icons like Marilyn Monroe, Judy Garland and Frank Sinatra in unguarded moments. Unlike the movie-studio portrait photographers whose images were idealized and airbrushed, Stern typically photographed stars candidly on the set, at home and at private gatherings.

"He made them seem real," Robert Cushman, photography curator for the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences told the Times in 2003.

One of his most memorable images is of Brando, in jeans and black leather jacket, walking the set of "The Wild One."

Another captures John Wayne chatting with a cigar-chomping John Ford while shooting "The Alamo."

Stern, who began working for Life in 1941, told the magazine in a 1993 interview that he rarely became friendly with the stars he photographed.

"I was like the plumber who comes to fix your toilet, then you don't see him again," he said. Besides, he said, "I didn't care to know them, usually—so many of them were frankly a pain."

For several decades, Stern also shot album covers and was a familiar presence at recording sessions with Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, Dizzy Gillespie and other jazz greats. He was also the official photographer of President John F. Kennedy's inaugural gala.

In 1945, Stern married Rose Mae Lindou, a model with the John Robert Powers agency. She preceded him in death, as did his daughter, Lata, and son, Philip. His survivors include sons Peter Stern and Tom Stern, and eight grandchildren, the Times said.

‘Gone with the Wind’ premiere sparked tension

ATLANTA (AP)—Seventy-five years after the premiere of the movie “Gone with the Wind,” research is shedding light on the racial tensions that existed at the time between the producer and city of Atlanta officials.

Emory University film studies professor Matthew Bernstein has conducted extensive research into the archives of the film’s producer, David O. Selznick. His findings illustrate some of Selznick’s concerns with the city’s treatment of the film’s black stars at the Dec. 15, 1939 premiere.

“Producer David O. Selznick was upset that Hattie McDaniel would not be invited to the Atlanta premiere,” said Bernstein. “He argued over and over that she should be allowed.”

McDaniel played the character, Mammy, and went on to become the first black actor to receive an Academy Award for her performance as Best Supporting Actress in 1940.

AP

In this image provided by Turner Classic Movies, Vivien Leigh appears in character as Scarlett O’Hara, left, and Hattie McDaniel as Mammy, in the film, “Gone with the Wind.”

Selznick was guided by the office of Atlanta’s then-mayor William B. Hartsfield. It was Hartsfield that originally reached out to Selznick to bring the premiere to the city.

But due to the racial segregation laws of the time, none of the movie’s black stars were allowed to attend the premiere or even be included in the movie’s promotional program. McDaniel did attend the Los Angeles premiere and was featured in the program.

“Selznick, because he was Jewish, was very mindful of the persecution of the Jews in Europe in the late-1930s under Nazism,” Bernstein remarks. “And he saw an analogy between that persecution and the life of African-Americans under Jim Crow, especially in the South.”

Bernstein spent years poring over the Harry Ransom Center’s Selznick archive at the University of Texas, Austin. Among the items studied, memos and telegrams exchanged with Selznick’s staff document the extent of his efforts to persuade Atlanta officials to change their minds.

However, Katharine Brown, Selznick’s east coast assistant and story editor, concedes in a Dec. 8, 1939 letter to Selznick that efforts to include the black cast must end.

“I hope this will not prove to be a dissatisfaction to you but with everyone so touchy, I am trying very hard to use my very best judgment not to create situations,” Brown writes.

In contrast to the city’s treatment of the movie’s black cast, local black organizations performed at various events leading up to the night of the premiere.

“One of the most fascinating things about the festivities is Martin Luther King Jr., when he was 10 years old, actually appeared on stage at a charity ball dressed as a slave in front of a mock-up of Tara singing with the Ebenezer Baptist Church choir,” Bernstein points out.

Steve Klein, a spokesman for The King Center, confirmed the event as a reflection of the times but offered a poignant analogy for the civil- and human-rights icon. “It’s kind of neat that he could go on and be awarded the Nobel Prize.”

Judy Blume book for adults to be released in June

NEW YORK (AP)—Judy Blume is returning to the grown-up section.

Blume

The author’s first adult novel since 1998 is coming out in June. Publisher Alfred A. Knopf announced Monday that the novel “In the Unlikely Event” will be set in the early 1950s in Blume’s native New Jersey and will tell of a series of mysterious plane crashes.

The 76-year-old Blume is one of the world’s most popular children’s authors. She is known for such novels as “Are You There God? It’s Me, Margaret” and “Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing.”

Most writers for young people struggle to reach older audiences, but Blume’s previous adult novel, “Summer Sisters,” sold more than 3 million copies.

‘True Blood’ actress Anna Camp to star in new play

NEW YORK (AP)—”Pitch Perfect” and “True Blood” actress Anna Camp is returning to the stage, starring as a struggling writer in a new play by Nick Jones at Lincoln Center.

Camp, whose credits include the film “The Help” and parts on Broadway in “Equus” and “The Country Girl,” will lead the cast of the thriller “Verite” at the Claire Tow Theater starting Jan. 31.

“It’s really something I haven’t read before. So I was determined to go get it,” Camp said. “It’s ahead of the audience. I was never ahead of it while reading it.”

Camp

Camp wrapped up “True Blood” this summer and appears in two upcoming films — with Paul Schneider in “Goodbye to All That” this week and with Anna Kendrick in “Pitch Perfect 2” in May — so she’s looking forward to some theater work.

“I need it,” Camp said Monday from Los Angeles. “It’s going to be in the dead of winter, in New York, but that’s fine. I don’t care. I feel like my soul needs it.

‘Theory of Everything’ star Eddie Redmayne weds

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Eddie Redmayne is celebrating more than his best-actor nominations this week. “The Theory of Everything” star is also a newlywed.

A spokeswoman for Redmayne says the actor married his girlfriend, Hannah Bagshawe, in a private ceremony Monday in England.

Publicist Carrie Gordon says the couple celebrated with a small number of close family and friends.

The 32-year-old Redmayne is generating big awards buzz for his turn as Stephen Hawking in “The Theory of Everything” and has already garnered nominations from the Golden Globes and Screen Actors Guild Awards.

Redmayne’s past film credits include “Les Miserables” and “My Week With Marilyn.”

AP

In this Tuesday, Dec. 9, 2014 file photo, actor Eddie Redmayne and Hannah Bagshawe arrive on the blue carpet for the UK premiere of “The Theory of Everything,” at the Odeon in Leicester Square, central London.

Internet obsession threatens to consume widower’s life

DEAR ABBY: I am a 58-year-old recent widower. My wife and I were very happy for 29 years, and that included a satisfying sex life. Although I am not ready to date yet, I continue to have a strong sex drive.

I’m finding the Internet is a good alternative to “hooking up” at this time. However—and this is embarrassing to admit at my age—I’m beginning to wonder if I have crossed a line into spending too much time online.

My question is, how much is too much? I want to be healthy and in balance with this, but for the first time, I understand how people can become addicted to Internet porn. Guidelines, please?

JUST WONDERING IN GEORGIA

DEAR JUST WONDERING: You have my sympathy for your loss. Because you are concerned enough about the amount of time you’re spending on adult Internet sites that you’re asking me about it, I think we both know that you’re not spending enough time in the real world. If this has become so much of a preoccupation that you’re substituting porn for relationships with real people, then you are “overdosing” and could benefit from talking to a psychologist about it. (You might find it easier to confide in one who’s male.)

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: During a disagreement with my boyfriend, he called me a “b----.” We have been together for 13 years, and he has never disrespected or degraded me that way before. He apologized later and said what he meant was I was acting like one (as if that’s any better), but I’m having a hard time getting past this.

When he called me that, I was stunned. I felt nauseated the rest of the day, as if he had literally punched me in the stomach. Am I wrong to react this way? Am I making a big deal out of it, and should I just accept his apology and let it go? I just feel so hurt.

DEGRADED IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEAR DEGRADED: People often say things they don’t mean—or something they later regret—in the heat of an argument. One slip of the tongue after 13 years together shouldn’t be a deal-breaker. Accept his apology and move on already.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I have a co-worker who is deaf. We eat lunch together every day and usually get along well. She recently told me that when she goes out with friends, she gets drunk and then drives herself home. I tried explaining why that’s not a good idea, but she got defensive and told me she’s a grown woman and not to lecture her because it’s her decision.

I have now lost so much respect for her that I’m no longer comfortable eating with her. What should I do?

SOBER IN SAN DIEGO

DEAR SOBER: A deaf person has extra challenges while driving and has to be extra safety-conscious behind the wheel. Add booze to that equation, and it could mean disaster. You have spoken your mind and she has spoken hers. Because you’re no longer comfortable eating with her, find another luncheon companion.

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

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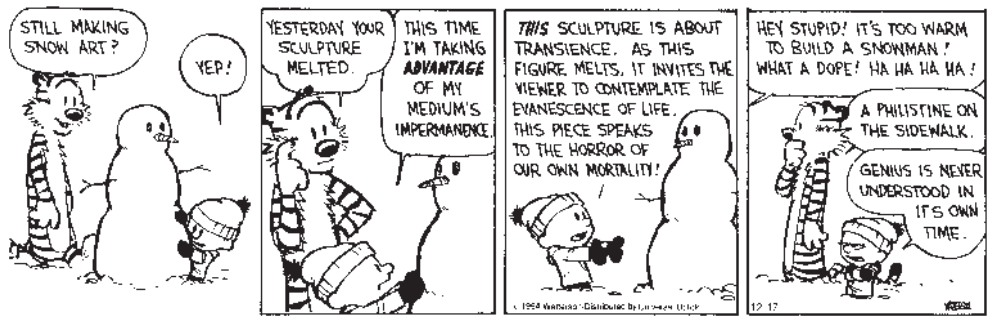
To receive a collection of Abby’s most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


STILL MAKING SNOW ART?
YEP!
YESTERDAY YOUR SCULPTURE MELTED.
THIS TIME I'M TAKING ADVANTAGE OF MY MEDIUM'S IMPERMANENCE.
THIS SCULPTURE IS ABOUT TRANSIENCE. AS THIS FIGURE MELTS, IT INVITES THE VIEWER TO CONTEMPLATE THE EVANESCENCE OF LIFE. THIS PIECE SPEAKS TO THE HORROR OF OUR OWN MORTALITY!
HEY STUPID! IT'S TOO WARM TO BUILD A SNOWMAN! WHAT A DOPE! HA HA HA HA!
A PHILISTINE ON THE SIDEWALK.
GENIUS IS NEVER UNDERSTOOD IN IT'S OWN TIME.
12-17

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

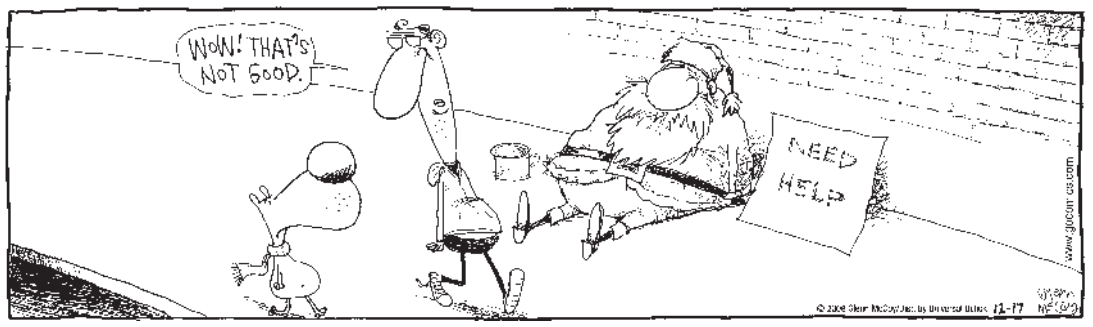
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

I HAVE CHRISTMAS SHOW FATIGUE.
SO DON'T WATCH.
I CAN'T HELP MYSELF! IF THE KIDS ARE WATCHING THEM, I'M POWERLESS NOT TO WATCH.
AND KATY'S GONNA WEAR THAT "RUDOLPH" DISC OUT. IT'S STARTING TO MESS WITH MY BRAIN.
I SIGNED A CHECK TODAY AS YUKON CORNELIUS.
REALLY? YOU'RE MORE OF A MISFIT TOY.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

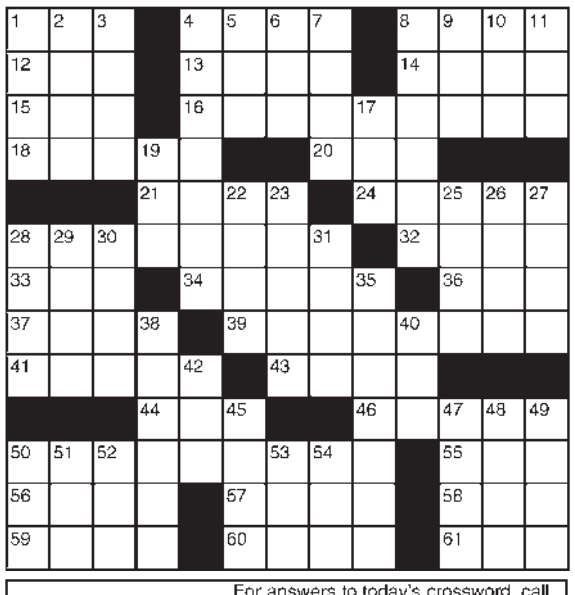
ACROSS
1 Hot tub
4 State
8 Rocky outcrop
12 Homer's neighbor
13 Old Italian bread
14 Portrayal
15 Work with
16 Foldable furniture
18 Drum type
20 Oprah's network
21 Opposite of "sans"
24 Reserved
28 Dining surface
32 Thy
33 Coloration
34 Margaret Mead subject
36 Sawbuck
37 Caspian feeder
39 Pentagon VIPs
41 Slightly tainted, as meat
43 Penn or Connery
44 Bishop's bailiwick
46 "Of course"
50 Oompah group
55 Life story, for short
56 Vacillate
57 Sandwich treat
58 Lumberjack's need
59 Basin accessory
60 Night light
61 Rep. or Dem.

DOWN
1 Ignore
2 Mexican money
3 Mideast gulf
4 Nooks
5 By way of
6 Mess up
7 Start over
8 Nook
9 Steal from
10 Everybody
11 "Holy cow!"
17 Pair
19 Four qts.
22 Coup d'—
23 Crooner Perry et al.
25 Tittle
26 Poolroom array
27 Sea flock
28 Hoodlum
29 Emanation
30 Construction piece
31 Francis, e.g.
35 Strand
38 Landlord
40 Genetic stuff
42 "Indeed"
45 Black, in verse
47 Recipe meas.
48 "Arrivederci"
49 Bay
50 "See ya"
51 Line
52 Favorable vote
53 Exist
54 "The Matrix" character

Solution time: 23 mins.

A	E	U	T	■	I	S	L	E	■	L	E	D
S	A	G	A	■	O	P	A	L	■	O	S	O
S	I	G	H	T	W	A	V	E	■	N	A	P
■	■	■	S	H	A	M	■	V	O	G	U	E
V	A	L	U	E	■	■	H	E	R	■	■	■
E	G	O	S	■	B	E	A	N	B	A	G	S
N	L	N	■	T	A	L	K	S	■	N	E	O
D	E	G	A	U	L	L	E	■	A	G	E	D
■	■	■	J	U	N	K	■	■	B	L	E	S	S
A	W	O	K	E	■	C	E	L	I	■	■	■
R	A	H	■	S	H	O	R	T	C	A	K	E
I	N	N	■	I	O	T	A	■	I	R	O	N
A	D	S	■	N	E	S	S	■	A	C	I	D

Yesterday's answer 12-17



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18– only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Milla Jovovich, 39; Bill Pullman, 61; Eugene Levy, 68; Ernie Hudson, 69.

Happy Birthday: Watch what's going on around you at work and at home. Look carefully at the changes taking place and you will find a way to spin things in your favor. Being cognizant of what everyone else is doing and trying to implement the best of what others have to offer will be your ticket to success, popularity and advancement. Your numbers are 8, 12, 20, 29, 34, 35, 46.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Move forward with caution. Don't rely on others to feed you information or to help you make the right choice. Emotions will get in your way if you share your feelings with people who can influence future prospects. Focus on completion. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): You will learn valuable information if you listen to someone you respect or an expert in a field that interests you. Don't disagree with peers. Size up the situation and continue using your own methods. Love is highlighted. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Protect what you have. Don't invest in what someone else suggests. An impulsive purchase or decision will go well over budget. Stick close to home and work on preparing your environment for the turn of the year. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Take a unique approach when dealing with partners, children or people you care about. Your dedication and sense of justice and fair play will be good enough. Don't feel you have to pay for someone else's mistakes. Love is on the rise. ✪✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): You may crave a change of scenery, but don't leave someone out who is counting on you for emotional support. Problems will arise if you let uncertainty affect an important decision you need to make. Overspending will lead to added stress. ✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Do something nice for the people you care about. Offer your time, help or suggestions, but don't overspend trying to buy love and affection. It's not about the gifts you purchase, it's your time and help that should win favors. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Be careful what you say. A change in the dynamics of a relationship will leave you in emotional turmoil. Do whatever it takes to live up to your promises, but enforce moderation to avoid a financial setback. Be creative, not frivolous. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Load up your schedule and start checking off your to-do list. Taking on a challenge and using unique means to come up with a good plan that will please someone you love will lead to financial uncertainty. Stick to a budget. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Good fortune is heading your way, but the temptation to be a spendthrift will be overpowering. You can make changes without breaking the bank. Focus on doing as much of the legwork as possible to cut your overhead. Be reasonable. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): You'll be emotional today. Talks will leave you in a quandary. A change of plans will be upsetting if you feel you are losing control over a situation. It's okay to sit back and let others fend for themselves. ✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Stick to what you know and focus on putting your work behind you before the year ends. Emotional matters will escalate if you or someone close to you has overspent. An opportunity to change your vocation will help smooth things over. ✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Ask and you shall receive. Give and take, do what you say and hold others accountable for the offers made. This can be a winning situation if you stick to practical and doable plans. Love is highlighted. ✪✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are lucky and fun. You are adaptable, charming and popular.

*Eugenia's website—**eugenialast.com**, Eugenia's android app @ **http://bit.ly/exhoro** and join Eugenia on **twitter/facebook/linkedin**.*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		8	5	9	7	1		
	3						5	
6				2				7
8				7				9
5	4			3	8	2		6
2								5
3								1
	8			5			2	
		4	9	1	2	6		

Difficulty Level ★★★ 12/17

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

7	9	4	2	8	1	5	6	3
5	2	3	6	4	7	1	9	8
6	8	1	3	9	5	4	2	7
8	5	2	9	7	4	6	3	1
9	3	6	1	5	2	7	8	4
1	4	7	8	6	3	9	5	2
4	1	9	5	2	8	3	7	6
3	6	8	7	1	9	2	4	5
2	7	5	4	3	6	8	1	9

Difficulty Level ★★ 12/16

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

HISTORICAL MYSTERIES **Solution: 12 letters**

E	T	S	E	L	E	C	N	E	D	I	V	E	Y	S
B	S	O	U	N	D	O	S	E	U	L	C	K	T	E
S	Y	H	A	A	I	L	E	M	A	N	A	O	I	T
S	D	R	T	H	E	O	R	Y	A	S	N	N	T	T
E	A	B	A	Y	U	N	S	R	P	E	A	A	N	L
N	N	J	I	M	M	Y	A	E	H	A	T	O	E	E
H	C	R	A	E	S	E	R	E	E	R	I	R	D	M
C	I	H	Ⓢ	C	P	H	N	M	N	H	V	A	I	E
O	N	Ⓘ	R	P	A	G	S	I	O	A	E	L	A	N
L	Ⓖ	O	A	U	E	K	H	S	M	R	S	I	F	T
Ⓝ	L	S	S	T	H	G	I	S	E	T	H	E	F	T
L	I	E	U	G	A	L	P	I	N	C	A	N	O	S
D	R	L	A	R	E	T	S	N	O	M	R	S	H	O
D	Y	W	R	I	T	I	N	G	N	E	D	O	C	L
S	I	T	N	A	L	T	A	I	R	C	R	A	F	T

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Aircraft, Aliens, Amelia, Atlantis, Celeste, Clues, Code, Colony, Dancing, Disappearance, Earhart, Evidence, Forces, Hauser, Hoffa, Identity, Jimmy, Kasper, Loch Ness, Lost, Mary, Missing, Monster, Myths, Natives, Phenomenon, Plague, Research, Roanoke, Scroll, Settlement, Ships, Sights, Sign, Sound, Stonehenge, Theft, Theory, Writing

Yesterday's Answer: Menorah

Treasury 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 or 19 can be purchased on line at www.WonderWordBooks.com. (Contain 130 puzzles.)

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Saipan Tribune

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Luxury 1BR & 1BTH approximately 600 sq/ft
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Let's GO Tour Company is a new company on Saipan that specializes in offering unique day tours on the island. Our company is one of the first in the region to introduce the latest models of the Polaris RZR's all-terrain "side by side" vehicles that will take tourists on several breath-taking tours on Saipan. We are inviting qualified U.S. workers to apply for the position of:

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High school diploma or equivalent with at least six (6) months work or personal experience with All Terrain Vehicles (ATV) and/or Utility Task Vehicles (UTV). Tour operation, sales or service experience is preferred. Must be able to set up and operate audio and video equipment. The position involves traveling to various tour locations to conduct tours for individuals or groups. It also requires routine inspection of sites and equipment to detect safety concerns. As the person in this position will frequently communicate with foreign markets, ability to speak Chinese/Mandarin or Korean or Japanese or Russian is desired.

Interested applicants may send their applications to lt_recruitment@tanholdings.com. To be considered, applications must be submitted not later than December 17, 2014. Applications for Employment are available at the Human Resources Department located at the 2nd floor of the JP Center Building along Beach Road or at the Century Tours office at Kanoa Resort. Pre-employment drug testing will be required prior to employment.

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
(This ad is paid for by NMHC.)

OPENING DATE: NOVEMBER 28, 2014
CLOSING DATE: DECEMBER 19, 2014 TIME: 4:30 PM

SALARY AT PL 35-08 THRU 12 - $40,531.43 - $49,266.21 PER ANNUM COMMENSURATE WITH EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE.

"MANAGER FOR PROGRAM & HOUSING DIVISION"

Detailed job description, qualification requirements and other information may be picked up, together with NMHC's employment application form, during regular working hours at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan during regular working hours, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

All applicants must complete and submit the NMHC Employment Application Form together with required documents that are listed in the Employment Application Package. Failure to provide the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. NMHC and all its properties are drug-free zones; therefore, selected applicant will be subject to pre-employment drug screening.

It is the policy of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) that the merit system will be applied and administered according to the principle of equal opportunity for all citizens and nationals as defined by its personnel regulations and the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Constitution regardless of age, race, sex, religion, political affiliation or belief, marital status, disability or place of origin.

For inquiries, please contact Jocelyn C. Seman, Office Manager at (670) 234-9447/7689 or by email to officemanager@nmhcgov.net. NMHC is a fair housing agency and an equal opportunity provider, lender and employer.

/s/
JESSE S. PALACIOS
Corporate Director

TAGA *Sports* is now on issuu.com/tagasports!

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WHATZIT Solution: Good intentions

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Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 5-day run in both print and online editions, for as low as $30 for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of the packages below.

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• 5-Liner	$24	$45

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

shun shun shun
shun GOOD shun
shun shun shun

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www.facebook.com/dingbatsgames

Find today's solution in classified section

Saints beat Bears 31-15, grab South lead

CHICAGO (AP)—Turns out all Drew Brees and the New Orleans Saints needed to solve their problems was to show up in Chicago.

Nothing like playing the Bears to break a slump. Even better, the Saints jumped into first place.

Brees threw for 375 yards and three touchdowns, and New Orleans beat Chicago 31-15 on Monday night to grab the NFC South lead.

The Saints (6-8) moved into first place ahead of Carolina (5-8-1) and Atlanta (5-9) after losing four of their previous five games. They also rebounded from a 41-10 loss to the Panthers.

"I think we've shown a couple times we can handle adversity," Brees said. "Let's make sure we can handle success, too."

The Saints host the Falcons before finishing the season at Tampa Bay.

"The tendency after success is to relax, and it's not time to relax," Brees said.

Brees completed 29 of 36 passes and reached the 4,000-yard mark for the ninth straight year. He threw two touchdown passes to Josh Hill and another to Marques Colston.

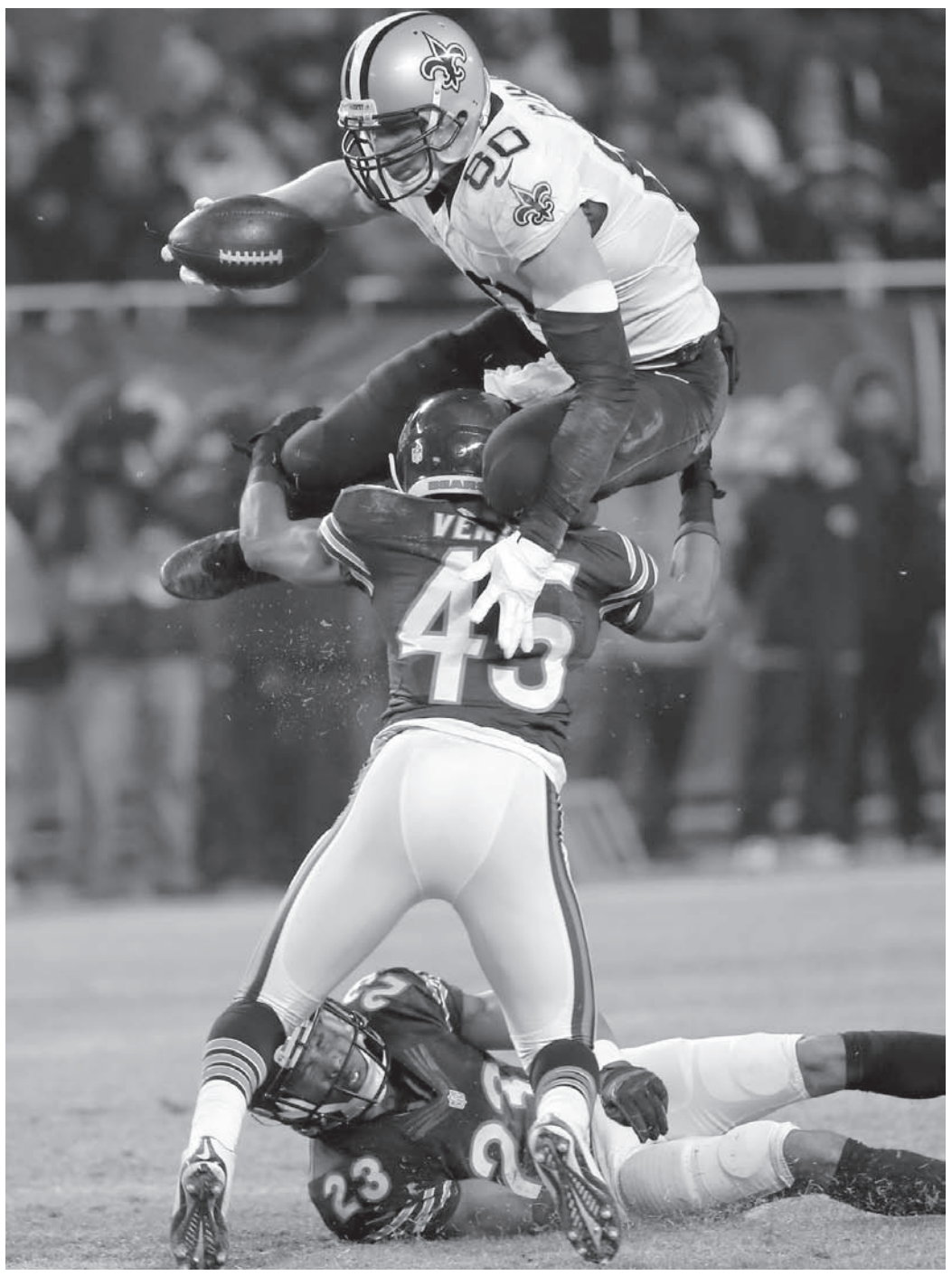
Pierre Thomas had five catches for 83 yards. David Hawthorne had three of New Orleans' seven sacks and the Saints intercepted Jay Cutler three times to bring his NFL-leading turnover total to 24.

"We were not in unison tonight collectively on the offensive side of the ball and that starts with me," Chicago coach Marc Trestman said.

For the Bears (5-9), the loss comes after a week in which they were again engulfed in controversy. Offensive coordinator Aaron Kromer acknowledged he was a source behind a critical report by the NFL Network about Cutler, owning up to it in public Friday after earlier asking players and coaches for forgiveness.

Cutler completed 17 of 31 passes for 194 yards, and the Bears couldn't get anything going. They managed only 278 yards against one of the league's worst defenses on a soggy night in which thousands of seats went unused.

There were 10,749 no-shows, and that might not have been a bad thing for the Bears, the way they played.



AP

New Orleans Saints tight end Jimmy Graham (80) leaps over Chicago Bears free safety Brock Vereen (45) after receiving a pass from quarterback Drew Brees (9) during the second half of an NFL football game Monday, Dec. 15, 2014, in Chicago.

The Saints went ahead in the second quarter after wasting several opportunities in the opening period. Bears cornerback Kyle Fuller was called for a 17-yard pass-interference penalty trying to defend Jimmy Graham, setting up New Orleans with a first down at the 8.

Brees then rolled to his right on the first play of the second quarter and found an open Hill, who lunged across the goal line.

The first half was so bad for Chicago that its best play might have been Patrick O'Donnell's 56-yard punt that went out of bounds at the New Orleans 5 with about four minutes left in the second. But the Saints responded with a 10-play, 95-yard drive.

Brees threw a 9-yard touchdown pass to Colston with 38 seconds left, giving the Saints a 14-0 lead. Cutler's pass was then picked off by Pierre Warren on the final play in the half.

Brees and Hill connected for a 7-yard TD on their first possession in the third on a similar play as their first score, making it 21-0. It was 24-0 early in the fourth when Cutler hit Marquess Wilson with a 1-yard touchdown pass, denying New Orleans its first shutout since 2012.

The Saints wasted a big scoring opportunity in the early going.

New Orleans took over at the Chicago 24 after Patrick Robinson intercepted a pass that went off Martellus Bennett's hands on the game's third play from scrimmage. Rather than grab the lead, the Saints quickly gave the ball back.

Nick Toon got stripped by Brock Vereen after a 10-yard reception and Jared Allen made the recovery at the 3.

The Saints came away empty-handed on their next possession when Shayne Graham's 51-yard field-goal attempt fell short. But the Saints eventually found their stride.

"I think there's a sense of urgency that we need to create each week, and we need to be mindful of how important that edge is to play well," coach Sean Payton said. "It's something we made a point of emphasis with everyone."

SIDEBAR

Union takes NFL to court over Peterson suspension

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—The NFL Players Association filed a federal lawsuit Monday for Adrian Peterson, asking the court to dismiss an arbitration ruling that upheld the NFL's suspension of the star running back.

The petition also requested a court order for Peterson's immediate reinstatement, arguing that Peterson has served far more than what's allowed by the collective bargaining agreement between the league and the players. Attorneys for the NFLPA asked to expedite the case in Minnesota, where the union has often gone to contest labor matters with the NFL.

Commissioner Roger Goodell suspended Peterson without pay for the last six games of this season and through at least April 15, the result of the child-abuse case that has kept the 2012 NFL MVP out of all but one game this year. Harold Henderson, the arbitrator appointed to hear Peterson's appeal, affirmed the entirety of Goodell's decision Friday.

The union argued that Henderson's decision was biased and overreaching, contrary to "fundamental principles of notice, fairness and consistency" and the essence of the CBA.

Henderson, the former NFL executive vice president for labor relations, has heard 88 appeals, according to the league.

In the petition, the NFLPA said Henderson "ran roughshod over the required procedural protections of the CBA" and "summarily rubberstamped the unlawful process and punishment of Mr. Peterson" with his ruling.

In his written decision last week, Henderson backed Goodell's assertion in determining punishment that Peterson lacked remorse for badly injuring his 4-year-old son with a wooden switch in an attempt to apply discipline. Peterson has said he's sorry and meant no harm.

"The fact that Arbitrator Henderson dismissed what Mr. Peterson actually said in favor of unverified and out-of-context news reports speaks volumes about his evident partiality," the NFLPA wrote in the petition.

The union accused Goodell of punishing Peterson to satiate "public calls for his resignation due to prior disciplinary failures" and said he picked Henderson to hear the appeal to "to avoid another embarrassing reversal" of his decision.

Goodell initially suspended Baltimore's Ray Rice for two games and then declared him out indefinitely Sept. 8 after video surfaced of the running back delivering a knockout punch to the woman who's now his wife. Between those decisions was Goodell's announcement Aug. 28 of tougher penalties for players involved with domestic violence, including a six-game suspension for a first-time offender.

The injuries to Peterson's son occurred in May. The union said Peterson should not have been subjected to the enhanced personal conduct policy.

The arbitrator in Rice's case overruled Goodell and reinstated him, though he had no team to return to because the Ravens had released him Sept. 8. In the petition for Peterson, attorneys pointed to that arbitrator's ruling that Goodell lacked the CBA authority to apply the enhanced policy to punish prior conduct.

The NFL declined to comment.

The case was originally assigned to U.S. District Judge David Doty but referred instead to U.S. Magistrate Judge Janie Mayeron.

The NFLPA again hammered away at NFL executive Troy Vincent, devoting about 10 of the 74 pages in the petition to recorded conversations between Vincent and Peterson informing the player he'd face only a two-game suspension under the previous policy and could rejoin the Vikings in late November.

'Super bacteria' found in Rio's Olympic waters

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP)—A drug-resistant "super bacteria" that's normally found in hospitals and is notoriously difficult to treat has been discovered in the waters where Rio de Janeiro's Olympic sailing events will be held, scientists said Monday.

The Instituto Oswaldo Cruz, Brazil's most respected health research institute, said it has discovered bacteria that produce an enzyme that make it resistant to most forms of treatment in water samples taken from various spots along the Carioca River. Among the spots is where the river flows into the city's Guanabara Bay, site of the 2016 sailing and wind surfing events.

Bacteria with the so-called KPC enzyme are difficult to treat. The institute said no instances of infection resulting from the contaminated water have yet been detected but warned of possible danger to swimmers.

"The illnesses caused by these microorganisms are the same as those caused by common bacteria, but they require stronger antibiotics and, sometimes, can require hospitalization," the study's coordinator, Ana Paula D'Alincourt Carvalho Assef, wrote in an email to The Associated Press. "Since the super bacteria are resistant to the most modern medications, doctors need to rely on drugs that are rarely used because they are toxic to the organism."

Even if they don't immediately fall ill, those who come into contact with the bacteria run the risk of becoming carriers of the microorganism, the institute said in its statement.

"Carriers can take these resistant bacteria back to their own environments and to other people, resulting in a cycle of dissemination," said the institute, which is affiliated with Brazil's Health Ministry.

With some 70 percent of sewage in this city of 12 million going untreated - and flowing, raw, into rivers, onto beaches and into the Guanabara Bay - water quality has been a major worry ahead of the 2016 summer games. In their Olympic bid, organizers pledged to slash by 80 percent the amount of sewage and garbage that's pumped into the bay daily, but critics insist little has been done.

Celtics rout Sixers, snap 3-game skid

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Kelly Olynyk scored a career-high 30 points, leading the Boston Celtics to a 105-87 victory over the Philadelphia 76ers on Monday night.

Avery Bradley had 15 points, and Brandon Bass and Jeff Green added 14 apiece for Boston (8-14), which snapped a three-game skid.

Rookie Nerlens Noel had a career-high 19 points for the 76ers (2-22), who dropped to 0-13 at home this season. Philadelphia moved closer to the NBA mark for worst home start to a season, set in the 1993-94 season when the Mavericks began 0-19.

The 76ers were coming off a late collapse in Saturday's 120-115 overtime home loss to Memphis when they gave up an 18-point lead with 7:39 left in the fourth quarter.

Tony Wroten, who entered leading Philadelphia in scoring at 17.5 points a game, went scoreless.

Boston rebounded after Friday's 101-95 loss to the Knicks, a game in which New York snapped its 10-game skid. Rajon Rondo had two points in that defeat and Jared Sullinger was scoreless.

The duo improved slightly against Philadelphia, tallying five points apiece. But they weren't needed much against the offensively challenged 76ers, who entered averaging a league-low 91.4 points. Philadelphia managed just 13 points in the second quarter and entered the break trailing 57-38.

Olynyk had 18 points on 7-of-9 shooting, including 3 of 4 from behind the arc, at the half. He finished 12 for 17 from the field, including 3 for 5 from 3-point range.

Boston fell into an early hole by missing its first nine field goals before settling in. Olynyk's 14 points helped Boston go in front 30-25 at the end of the first quarter.

Philadelphia never cut the margin under double-digits after halftime.

AP

Boston Celtics' Kelly Olynyk, center, and Philadelphia 76ers' Nerlens Noel, right, get tangled up during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Monday, Dec. 15, 2014, in Philadelphia.

Clippers 113, Pistons 99

In Los Angeles, Blake Griffin scored 18 points, DeAndre Jordan had 16 points and 15 rebounds, and the Los Angeles Clippers breezed to a 113-99 victory over the Detroit Pistons on Monday night.

Chris Paul had 11 points and eight assists. He committed one turnover in 24 minutes, after getting six in each of his previous two games. Paul finished last season with a league-best 4.57 assist-to-turnover ratio. Jodie Meeks had 20 points for Detroit.

J.J. Redick scored 14 points, and his streak of 29 games with a 3-pointer ended one game shy of teammate Matt Barnes' franchise record.

Jodie Meeks had 20 points and Andre Drummond had 18 points and 13 rebounds for the Pistons, who were coming off road wins against Phoenix and Sacramento after losing 13 straight.

The Clippers led 55-44 at halftime. Griffin set up a pair of alley-oop dunks by Jordan 68 seconds apart, capping a 16-4 run that turned a one-point deficit into a 47-36 lead with 4:41 left in the second quarter.

Los Angeles extended its lead to 73-53 on a four-point play by Barnes, who was fouled by Kyle Singler on a jumper with 4:57 left in the third quarter. The Pistons got no closer than 16 points after trailing by 27.

Griffin's final basket was a 3-pointer with 27.8 seconds left in the third. With the lead secure, Griffin sat out the fourth quarter.

Jordan Farmar's 3-pointer with 4.8 seconds left in the first quarter put the Clippers ahead 29-27. They had trailed by nine points and committed seven turnovers that were converted into 11 points. Redick made his first five shots.

Blazers 108, Spurs 95

In Portland, Damian Lillard had 23 points and a career-high 10 rebounds, and the Portland Trail Blazers downed the short-handed San Antonio Spurs 108-95 on Monday night.

LaMarcus Aldridge added 23 points and 14 rebounds for the Blazers, who have won seven of their last nine games. But starting center Robin Lopez injured his right hand early in the second half and did not return.

Kawhi Leonard had 21 points and nine rebounds for the Spurs, who had just 10 players available. Tim Duncan, who had 15 points and nine rebounds in a 99-91 victory the night before, was given the night off.

In addition to Duncan, the Spurs were also missing a number of players because of injuries. Manu Ginobili was out with a lower back bruise, while Tony Parker missed a second straight game because of a strained left hamstring.

Tiago Splitter was still rehabbing a high calf injury, and Patty Mills continues to recover after offseason right shoulder surgery.

The only two regular starters who played against the Blazers were Leonard and Danny Green. But Leonard gingerly held his left hand late in the game - the same hand that forced him to miss a pair of games earlier this month.

The Blazers faced the Spurs in the Western Conference semifinals last season, with San Antonio taking the series 4-1 on the way to the NBA championship. It was the first time Portland had advanced beyond the first round since 2000.

The Blazers held an edge on the Spurs for most of the first half, but began to pull away when Lillard's layup put Portland ahead 33-26. The Spurs closed the gap to 37-36 after Green's basket.

Cavaliers 97, Hornets 88

In Cleveland, LeBron James scored 27 points with 13 assists, Kevin Love added 22 points and 18 rebounds, and the Cleveland Cavaliers defeated the Charlotte Hornets 97-88 on Monday night.

The Cavaliers jumped to a 21-0 lead, but the Hornets regrouped and got within two points early in the third quarter before the Cavaliers pulled away.

The Cavaliers ended the third on a 21-9 run. Kyrie Irving scored 16 points for the Cavaliers, who were coming off consecutive road losses to Oklahoma City and New Orleans after winning eight in a row.

Kemba Walker led Charlotte with 24 points while Al Jefferson added 14.

Raptors 95, Magic 82

In Toronto, Lou Williams scored 18 points, Kyle Lowry had 17 and the Raptors won their 10th straight game over the Magic.

Amir Johnson scored 11 points and Patrick Patterson had 10 for the Raptors, who improved to 11-1 this season against opponents with losing records. This was Toronto's third of six straight games against teams below .500.

Tobias Harris scored 18 points, Ben Gordon had 16, Nikola Vucevic had 13 and Victor Oladipo 12 for the Magic, who have not won in Toronto since March. 26, 2012.

Pacers 110, Lakers 91

In Indianapolis, Rodney Stuckey scored 20 points and grabbed 10 rebounds to lead Indiana over the Lakers 110-91.

Los Angeles shot 33 percent from the floor and trailed by 39 points during the game.

CJ Miles scored 20, David West and C.J. Watson each scored 12, and Donald Sloan scored 17 points for Indiana. Kobe Bryant led the Lakers in scoring with 21 points, shooting 8 of 26 from the floor.

Nick Young scored 18 points and Carlos Boozer recorded a double-double with 13 points and 10 rebounds. The Pacers bench outscored the Lakers bench 52-46.

Hawks 93, Bulls 86

In Atlanta, Al Horford scored 21 points, including a huge jumper with just under a minute remaining, and the streaking Hawks won for the 10th time in 11 games with a victory over the Bulls.

The Hawks led most of the way, but never by more than 10 points. After Taj Gibson's dunk with 1:13 remaining brought the Bulls to 87-84, Horford got loose for a 19-footer on the wing and knocked it down.

Jimmy Butler led the Bulls with 22 points. The Bulls had won six straight over the Hawks.

White Sox reach $42M deal with Cabrera

CHICAGO (AP)—The White Sox finalized a $42 million, three-year contract with free agent Melky Cabrera on Monday, bolstering their outfield with their latest big move in an impressive offseason.

Cabrera will make $13 million in 2015, $14 million in 2016 and $15 million in the final season of the contract, according to a person with direct knowledge of the deal. The agreement also includes limited trade provision for the 30-year-old left fielder, who hit .301 with 16 homers and 73 RBIs in 139 games with Toronto last season.

The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the team had not announced the contract. The busy White Sox scheduled a news conference for Tuesday to introduce offseason acquisitions Jeff Samardzija and David Robertson, and the team could announce Cabrera's deal at the same time.

White Sox outfielder Adam Eaton welcomed Cabrera in a tweet on Saturday night, and then Cabrera retweeted the message - signaling a deal was imminent. WSCR-AM 670 was the first to report the agreement.

Cabrera could slot in behind Eaton in the No. 2 spot in the lineup. He made his major league debut in 2005 with the New York Yankees and is a .286 career hitter with 88 homers and 520 RBIs in 1,211 games.

Cabrera had his best season in 2012 with San Francisco, when he batted .346 with 11 homers and 60 RBIs in 113 games. He also was the MVP of the All-Star game that year, but missed the last part of the season when he was suspended for 50 games for a positive test for artificial testosterone.

Rios, Royals agree to $11M deal

In Kansas City,Outfielder Alex Rios and the Kansas City Royals have agreed to an $11 million, one-year contract, a person with knowledge of the negotiations said Monday.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the deal was subject to Rios passing a physical.

Rios would take over in right field from Nori Aoki, who became a free agent after helping the Royals win their first AL pennant since 1985.

Rios, who turns 34 in February, had been with Texas since August 2013 and hit .280 this year with four homers and 54 RBIs. He set career highs with the Chicago White Sox in 2012 with 25 homers and 91 RBIs.

Selected by Toronto with the 19th overall pick in the 1999 amateur draft, Rios has .278 average in 11 big league seasons with 165 homers.

His agreement was first reported by CBS.

Rios is the second bat added by the Royals this month following a $17 million, two-year agreement with designated hitter Kendrys Morales that has not been announced. Morales would replace Billy Butler.

Kansas City still may seek a starting pitcher to join a starting rotation projected to have Jordano Ventura, Jason Vargas, Jeremy Guthrie and Danny Duffy following the loss of James Shields, who became a free agent. Possible fifth starters include left-hander Brandon Finnegan, who pitched in relief in the postseason, and Luke Hochevar, who missed the 2014 season following elbow ligament-replacement surgery.

Explosive fights rock Trench Warz 18

TRENCH TECH

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

JON PEREZ

Trench Tech's Jordan Manglona chokes hold Paul Ayuyu of Team Tinian in their bantamweight bout in last Friday's Trench Warz 18: Rock & Rumble at the Royal Taga Hall of the Saipan World Resort.

Undercard fighters also proved their worth and put on a show inside the octagon in last Friday's Trench Warz 18: Rock & Rumble at the packed Royal Taga Hall of the Saipan World Resort.

Eleven matches served as appetizer to Frank "The Crank" Camacho's winning return bout in a Trench Warz event and Roman "Boom" Alvarez 145-pound title win against deposed champion Rob "The Real Deal" Wusstig.

Jadrien "BonBon" Camacho opened up the night with a TKO victory over Jimmy Kaipat, beating his opponent with 1:12 in the second round via elbows.

Denny Jepen then followed it up with a win against Rai Norita via armbar submission in the 1:59 mark of the opening round, while Guam's Dino "NHB" Cruz ended LJ "Makpo" George's unbeaten streak.

Jonathan "Outlaw" Camacho foiled Team Zalaka's Bradlee Manalo's Trench Tech debut with their fight going the judges' scorecards and the former winning via unanimous decision.

Mike Picini of Guam Muay Thai, in the next fight, won by TKO against Ben Flores of Team Marianas Elite after forcing his opponent to retire with 1:12 gone in the second round, following a powerful kick on Flores' chest.

The 5'5" Jones Langu used his height and reach advantage in defeating the 5'0" Allan "The Silver Bullet" Aguon by way of rear naked choke in 1:29 of the first round, while John Tudela defeated Jamaal Mresbang after the latter retired with the second round was about to start.

The eighth fight was a Guam versus Saipan match between Eric "Gatti" Gatman of Guam Muay Thai and Trench Tech's "Shiska" Bob Alvarez. Both fighters never held back and gave it their all since a lot of pride was at stake. Gatman used a triangle choke to force Alvarez to submission in the 3:08 mark of Round 2.

Team Tinian's Paul Ayuyu was looking for some payback when he faced Trench Tech's Jordan Manglona. Both fighters competed in last month's Art of War 9: Grappling, Submission and Jiu where Manglona defeated Ayuyu twice in the finals of their bantamweight and featherweight bouts.

The match went the full three rounds and Ayuyu seemed headed to victory when he had the clear advantage over Manglona. But the Trench Tech fighter managed to get out of his stranglehold and turned the tables around and used a rear naked choke to force his opponent to submission in 2:46 of the third.

Rocky Quichocho won in his rematch against Myron San Nicolas via TKO, as the former rained a flurry of punches on his opponent, forcing referee Tony D'Angelo to stop the fight in the 2:17 mark of the second round.

Jose Ramirez, in the final undercard bout, only needed 1:11 of the first round in beating Vince Pua. Ramirez used a Guillotine choke in forcing his opponent to submission.

Kobee hoards awards

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

BANMI

Kobee Mendoza nearly swept the individual awards in the 2014 BANMI Youth League, winning five of the six trophies handed out in the closing ceremony of the competition last Saturday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Mendoza, who played for the San Jose Ol'Aces in the U18 age group, took the scoring champion and regular season and Finals MVP plums in the division. In the U21 division, the Marianas High School standout, who suited up for the Ol'Aces, bagged the scoring champion and regular season MVP awards.

Jack Aranda of the U21 champions 670 Sonics prevented a Mendoza sweep after clinching the Finals MVP honors.

Mendoza led the SJ Ol'Aces to a perfect record (8-0) in the round-robin regular season and averaged close to 13 points per game. He recorded his best output against the Chalan Kanoa Saints late last month after firing 18 markers.

In the playoffs, Mendoza averaged 11.3 points, posting 10 and 5 markers in the SJ Ol'Aces 70-32 rout of the Rollers B in the quarterfinals and 47-41 semis victory against the Rollers A, respectively. In the finals, which the Ol'Aces won against Kentucky Fried Chicken, 95-84, Mendoza led the champion team with his 19 markers.

A few hours after clinching the U18 division crown for the SJ Ol'Aces, Mendoza then played for the Ol'Aces in their U21 title showdown against the Sonics. The MHS guard managed to score 10 points before leaving the match early in the fourth after a bad fall.

Before eventually losing to the Sonics in the finals, 60-66, Mendoza helped the Ol'Aces swept the regular season (7-0). He averaged close to 12 points in the elimination round. He then scored 10 markers in their 93-32 demolition of Laly 4 in the first round of the playoffs and 16 in their semis victory over Dream team.

Mendoza

ADA

From Page 28

for Eastern and midway in the second handed the ball to Tkel, who gifted the Lightning with a 38-yard TD run to make it 12-0.

The Vikings, in between those scoring opportunities by the Dave Ada-coached squad, failed to break through the Lightning defense.

The Eastern offense, meanwhile, was humming like a big well-oiled machine with Ada finding Tkel wide open for a 36-yard TD. The Lightning quarterback made it 20-0 when he ran for the 2-point conversion.

Don Pangelinan, in the Vikings' possession, got the Northern crew of coach Joe Ocampo on the scoreboard with a 1-yard TD run for a 20-6 tally.

Ada, however, was not yet done, throwing a 48-yard TD pass this time to his cousin Austin Ada in the closing seconds of the second period to give the Lightning a 26-6 cushion entering the halftime break.

Tkel had back-to-back 33-yard TD runs to hike the Eastern lead to 38-6 with Donavin Ada again running for the 2-point conversion in the third period.

Anthony Quitugua scored for the Northern squad with a 22-yard TD run in the fourth quarter, 40-12, for the Vikings' last score.

Another Ada to Ada play closed out the scoring for the Lightning, as Donavin hooked up a 28-yard TD pass to Austin.

Austin, Kapileo, and Tkel combined for 5 TDs, 6 receptions, and 143 of the 162 total yardage of the Lightning.

Tkel also anchored the Eastern defense with 9 tackles while Kimo Angailen had 7.5 tackles and 1 sack. Ryuta Onuki, Augustine Aguon, and Kermenes Terry Jr. combined for 16 sacks.

Don Pangelinan, Derick Aguon, Mariano Kaipat, and Neldrayton Skera finished with 4, 3, 2.5 and 2 sacks, respectively.

The Lightning dominated the entire match enjoying a 378-122 tally in total offense, passing, and rushing.

Meanwhile, the Lightning will again face the Southern Thunder at 1pm on Saturday in what could be a preview of the championship.

NMSA

From Page 28

of points, was held to a season-low 8 markers with Joe Esteves nailing 5 in the opening canto.

NMSA's 4-point lead after three quarters, 50-46, was already a luxury as the opposing teams exchanged scoring spurts, making the fight for the first finals seat a seesaw battle.

Peter Camacho buried timely baskets to lead NMSA's fourth quarter push as he scored 7 to help his team seal the win. Camacho finished with 13 markers and 8 rebounds, while Preston Basa paced NMSA's scoring with 18 and Elias Rangamar added 10.

Leo Apelo scored the bulk of the Feds' points with 28 to go with his 4 rebounds and 4 steals. Juan Camacho tallied 16 points, 10 rebounds, and 4 assists while Ken McCain, who only scored 5 markers, collected a game-high 17 boards.

In the second game, Customs nearly squandered a 12-point fourth quarter lead before escaping with a thrilling 61-57 triumph over DPS.

A Leo Galarse 3-pointer sparked Customs' 9-0 run and turned a still manageable 44-41 lead to a 12-point spread with four minutes gone in the final period.

DPS, however, went on a closing 13-8 exchange to threaten at 54-61 with 1:06 left in the game.

Customs escaped with the win as DPS fired blanks in the final one minute before Trevor Ogumoro nailed 3-pointer with 8 seconds to go for the final tally.

Galarse led Customs with 19 points, 4 assists, 5 rebounds, and 2 steals, while Kelvin Fitial added 11 markers and 9 boards. David Camacho scored 10 and had 8 caroms.

No DPS player reached double digits with Ogumoro ending up with 9 and Maverick Saures getting 8. Edwin Camacho had 7 points, while Daniel Joab, Roy Kaipat, Paul Manglona and James Pua made 6 markers each. Joe Saures and Rudy Sablan scored 5 and 4, respectively.

First Game

NMSA 68–Basa 18, P. Camacho 13, Rangamar 10, Tudela 9, Caro 8, Winkfield 4, Babauta 3, Sablan 3.

Feds 67–Apelo 28, Camacho 16, Gamboa 7, Esteves 5, McCane 5, Deleon Guerrero 4, Park 2.

Scoring by quarters: 14-8, 30-31, 50-46, 68-67.

Second Game

Customs 61–Galarse 19, Fitial 11, Camacho 10, Cepeda 6, Reyes 5, Saralu 5, Pangelinan 4, Teregeyo 1.

DPS 57–Ogumoro 9, M. Saures 8, Camacho 7, Joab 6, Kaipat 6, Manglona 6, Pua 6, J. Saures 5, Sablan 4.

Scoring by quarters: 21-10, 30-25, 44-41, 61-57.

CUP

From Page 28

zawa got his first goal in the 65th minute to spark an Inter Godfather's comeback.

The fall season top finisher had to rally midway in the second half after facing a 0-2 deficit early in the final 45 minutes of the match. Sean Perez drilled both goals for Tan Holdings, breaking the spell in the fourth minute of the second half. His second goal game in the 57th minute, boosting Tan Holdings' chances for an upset.

However, Inter Godfather's would not be denied as Tanzawa spearheaded a fightback with his first goal eight minutes later after Perez got his second. Peter Loken then evened up the match with his shot in the 75th minute, while Tanzawa completed the come-from-behind win with another goal five minutes before the match wrapped up.

Inter Godfather's will dispute the Cup against MP United this Sunday at 6pm.

MP United eased its way to the Cup finals after shutting down Wild Bill's, 3-0,

Raymond Mercado starred in the win, hitting two goals in back-to-back fashion, while Zhi Peng Lin knocked in the other one.

Lin hit the board first with his conversion in the 20th minute, while Mercado made it 2-0 for MP United with his first goal in the 35th. Mercado's other goal was recorded in the 65th minute.

Wild Bill's had repeated attempts to avoid a shutout, but just could not finish the play, as goalie Christopher Aninzo was there to save the day for MP United.

Meanwhile, in the Plate title match, it will be Matansa versus Sun Palace.

Matansa worked its way to the finale after a 6-5 victory in a penalty shootout over the hard fighting World Resort.

Gabriel Arkoh delivered the last and winning penalty shot for Matansa. Ahmed Titu, Young Ha Hwang, Tej Gurung, Amzad Hossain Khan, and Moe Zaw also scored for Matansa in the penalty shootout.

Kharki Durba missed the equalizer for World Resort, which got its five points in the penalty shootout from Juanito Tiamzon, Mason Fruit, Chhetri Dhiraj, Hoin Ryu, and Chandra Pakhrin.

Earlier in regulation, Pakhrin drilled the game-tying goal in the closing minute of the second half. Ryu scored World Resort's two other goals, posting his first in the ninth minute and the second four minutes later.

Matansa's three goals all came from Titu, who registered his first two in the 24th and 31st minute and the third 11 minutes into the second half.

In the other semis game in the Plate division, Sun Palace won over Shirley's Football Club, 1-0.

Feng Chun Jin scored the lone goal in the match in the ninth minute of stoppage time.

The Sun Palace-Matansa Cup finale will also be played this Sunday at 3:30pm.

2014 BANMI Youth League U18 Finals

PHOTOS BY ROSELYN B. MONROYO

The San Jose Ol'Aces' Ignacio Borja is sandwiched by two Kentucky Fried Chicken defenders during the first quarter of their title game in the U18 division of the 2014 BANMI Youth League last Saturday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Kentucky Fried Chicken's Wilfredo Francisco tries to keep his dribble and balance as a San Jose Ol'Aces player reaches in for a steal.

The San Jose Ol'Aces' Kobee Mendoza loses his balance after drawing a foul on Kentucky Fried Chicken' s Mark Ogasawara.

Kentucky Fried Chicken's Shane Deleon Guerrero drives against the San Jose Ol'Aces' Kobee Mendoza.

The San Jose Ol'Aces' Karlo De Leon goes up for a layup.

The San Jose Ol'Aces' Jayron Epity pulls up for a jumper.

The San Jose Ol'Aces' K.J. Nabors fakes off the defense of Kentucky Fried Chicken's Dixon Kwon.

Kentucky Fried Chicken' s Mark Ogasawara challenges the defense of the San Jose Ol'Aces' Joseph Sablan.

The San Jose Ol'Aces and Kentucky Fried Chicken players battle for the rebound.

Saints beat Bears 31-15, grab South lead

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Celtics rout Sixers, snap 3-game skid

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Ada throws 4 TDs in Lightning win

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Donavin Ada threw four touchdown passes, while Zander Tkel rushed for 177 yards in leading the Eastern Lightning to a 46-12 win over the Northern Vikings in Week 3 action of the 2014 CFL Youth Football League last Saturday at the CPA Airport Field.

The reigning titlists collected their second straight triumph in the Commonwealth Football League Association-organized competition, which plays with four 12-minute quarters. The Vikings remain winless after two games, while Southern Thunder complete the standings with an even 1-1 record.

Ada went 7-of-14 passing for 162 yards, while also rushing for 19, including a pair of 2-point conversions bridging the second and third quarters.

After a scoreless first quarter, the Lightning's offense went to work early in the second and slowly reached the Vikings' endzone.

Ada connected with Matthew Kapileo for a 10-yard strike to open up the scoring

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JON PEREZ
Two Eastern Lightning defenders attempt to bring down a Northern Vikings player, while their teammates stay in the play during their game in the 2014 CFL Youth Football League last Saturday at the CPA Airport Field.

Cup, Plate finalists complete

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Four teams prevailed in their respective semis matches to march into the finals of the M-League's Cup and Plate title games last Sunday at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

In the Cup finale, it will be the top-ranked Inter Godfather's and third-seeded MP United Football Club. MP United advanced to the finals first after stunning the second-ranked Wild Bill's, 2-1, while Inter Godfather's booked the second finals ticket after slipping past Tan Holdings FC, 3-2.

Ryu Tanzawa lifted Inter Godfather's to victory after making a pair of goals, including the game-winning shot in the 85th minute. Tan-

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Feng Chun Jin, seen here left alone with the possession during an earlier game in the M-League Plate Championship, scored the lone goal in Sun Palace's 1-0 semis win over Shirley's Football Club last Sunday at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

NMSA nails first finals berth; Customs survives

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Northern Marianas Sports Association clinched the first finals berth, while Customs remained in the hunt for the second spot in the double- elimination playoffs of the 2014 ITE&E-DYS Intergovernment Basketball League.

NMSA edged top seed Feds, 68-67, in the first game last Monday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium and is now waiting for its finals opponent, while Customs held off Department of Public Safety's comeback bid to complete a 61-57 win and arrange a knockout match with the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs at 6:30pm tonight.

NMSA used a balanced scoring in beating the Feds and avenging the 87-56 humbling it received to the same team in the elimination round last month with eight players submitting 3 points or more in their second outing with the latter.

It was a close game right from the opening tip with neither team leading by 5 points or more and NMSA keeping in check the Feds' usually explosive offense.

The Feds, which regularly breaks away early by burying its opponents with an avalanche

See NMSA on Page 26

JON PEREZ
The Department of Public Safety's Edwin Camacho, center, tries to keep the ball away from Customs' Nokki Saralu, right, during their playoff game in the 2014 ITE&E-DYS Inter-government Basketball League last Monday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.